



**A CRITICAL STUDY OF MAULANA ABUL
HASAN ALI NADWI'S ISLAMIC THOUGHT**

THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy
IN
ISLAMIC STUDIES

BY

ZUBAIR ZAFAR KHAN

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

DR. MUHAMMAD ISMAIL

DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH-202002 (INDIA)

2010

ABSTRACT

A Critical Study of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali

Nadwi's Islamic Thought

Throughout the history of Islam, 20th century has an outstanding significance for two great events, which never occurred before, among them, the fall of Khilafat in Turkey and the rise of European powers and their domination in the fields of arms, natural sciences, and technology. Because, till the fall of Khilafat, Islamic powers dominate the world in these fields and it was the first occasion in the whole Muslim history that the Khilafat was abolished totally. These two events shaken the whole Muslim world but with these worse catastrophes the most important aspect which impulse Islam with fresh endeavour is that, most of the reformist movements emerged during this period. In India due to the fall of Mughal rule and transformation of ruling power from the hands of Muslims to others, Indian Muslim society filled with chaos and pessimism. At this critical moment, many Muslim intellectuals and reformist movements were emerged to fill the void and to revive the Islamic faith in India. Among those famous movements was Khilafat movement, Deoband movement, Ahl-e-Hadith, Jamat-e-Islami, Tableeghi Jamat, Aligarh movement, movement of Nadwatul Ulama, etc.

Among the great personalities during this period were Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, Maulana Qasim Nanutavi, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi etc. Among these great Islamic luminaries, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (Ali Miyan) has an outstanding position, not only in India but also in the Islamic world particularly in the Arab world. Maulana Ali Miyan was a great socio-religious reformer of the 20th century. His reformist ideas well accepted not only by the Muslims, even non-Muslims admired his personality. He was a versatile genius and a prolific writer. It is true to say that Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was a great scholar, world-renowned thinker, Sufi reformer, profound theologian, high ranked educationist, as well as farsighted historian. He was entitled as “*Mufakkir-e-Islam*”. His words and writings revive the faith in the hearts of the millions of the Muslims. He authored around 50 books. Which are wide extended, focused, thought provoking and covered almost all aspects of Islamic sciences and Muslim history and culture. Most of his works have been translated in several languages.

Chapterization of the thesis are as follows:

- **CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**
- **CHAPTER 2: MAULANA ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI'S EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION**
- **CHAPTER 3: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO TAFSIR WRITING**
- **CHAPTER 4: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO HADITH LITERATURE**
- **CHAPTER 5: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO TASAWWUF AND TASAWWUF LITERATURE**
- **CHAPTER 6: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO FIQH (ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE)**
- **CHAPTER 7: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT RELATED TO WEST**
- **CHAPTER 8: RELIGIO-POLITICAL THOUGHT OF MAULANA ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI**
- **CHAPTER 9: ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE**
- **CONCLUSION**
- **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chapter first deals with general introduction of the thesis. The background of the study and its significance. Later we have discussed in brief the sources of the work and research techniques.

Chapter second deals with the early life and education of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. It focused on the factors

involved in the personality development of Ali Miyan. For understanding the thought of a scholar it plays a crucial role. Mostly the thought of a person influenced by the environment in which he lives. The social events and revolutions which Ali Miyan saw by his own eyes or he had a chance to interact with them. Like the British rule in India and its adversary behaviour with the Muslim population and struggle of freedom in the Indians like *Khilafat Movement* and afterwards the Independence and partition of India. In between the changing trends of cultural and social structure of India as well as the changing temperament of Muslim masses towards the religion and rise of different reformist movements of Islam in the Indian subcontinent Like, *Jamat-e-Islami*, *Tableegi Jamat*, *Deoband Movement*, *Aligarh Movement* and *Salafi Movement*, *Nadwa Movement* etc. And their diversified thoughts and practices moulded the thought of Ali Miyan in a specific manner. This was reflected in his speeches and works. These all aspects are discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter third discusses with the thought of Ali Miyan related to *Qur'an* and its exegesis. He applied deep thinking and intellect to study the inherent philosophical quotations of the *Qur'an*. Most of his writings contain several references from the *Qur'an*. He used *Qur'anic* verses extensively to prove his thoughts

and opinions. He put forth amazing illustrations of *Qur'anic* verses in his own specific way. Although he did not write a full commentary of the *Qur'an* but he explained some specific verses of the *Qur'an* and highlighted the lingual beauty. These new philosophical illustrations present a wonderful aspect of the *Qur'an* to readers and increase its significance to manifold. To understand his *Qur'anic* approach, his three writings are very important: Moarka-e-Iman-o-Maddiyat (Faith verses Materialism), Mansab-e-Nabuwwat aur uske ali Muqaam-e-Hamileen (Islamic Concept of Prophethood) and *Qur'an* ke Usool o Mubadi. I have discussed each of them briefly to present his thought, which he expressed in defining the commentary of these verses.

Chapter fourth critically examines the thought of Ali Miyan related to *Hadith*. In general, we can divide this chapter into three parts. The first part deals with his early education in *Hadith*, which he studied, with different teachers and their different methods of *Hadith* teachings. Like the method of Maulana Haider Hasan Khan and of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. The second part deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Hadith*. It focused on different aspects of his thought regarding *Hadith*, which were extracted from his own works and works done by others related to the subject. According to Ali

Miyan, *Hadith* constitute the complex, which provides the climate in which faith thrives and bears fruit. No faith can retain its warmth of feelings without presenting living examples of its teachings to infuse a life into its adherents. In a religion, the most potent and authentic information of religious events and their associated emotions and illustrations can only be provided by a portrayal of the life story of its founder. Judaism, Christianity and several other Faiths lost their inner vitality due to the simple reason, that they could not preserve reliable records of the life and character of their founders, deprived of this life giving source they were cut-off from the intellectual and spiritual climate which was necessary not only for the sustenance of faith and growth of religious spirit in the followers, but also that which could have saved it from the onslaught of materialism and agnosticism. Some of the leaders of these faiths realized this shortcoming and tried to fill in the void with manuals containing life accounts, sermons and table talks of their saints and holy men, but these efforts eventually proved to be a concoction of innovations and deviations, thereby distorting the original teachings of those Faiths. Thus, it is an outstanding virtue of Islam that it has preserved life record of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and no other Faith shared this value with it. In addition, the history of compilation of *Hadith* is a bright chapter of Islamic history, it reflects that this is not an accidental event or a *bidat*

(innovation) of later ages. The inclination of companions (*Sahabah*) toward the collection and compilation of *Hadith* just in the life time of the Prophet (pbuh) and recording of large number of Tradition, later, the development of the discipline of *Hadith* science for analyzing the authenticity and categorization of *Hadith* by *tabiun* (disciples of companions), as well as the mass gathering of the students of *Hadith* from Iraq, Iran, Khurasan and Turkistan etc. Their big sacrifices in learning, memorization, compilation, their extraordinary determination and development of the new Art of *Hadith* and its critical scrutiny like *Riwayat*, *Dirayat* and alongwith *Asma-al-Rijal*, the rising of great scholars of *Hadith*. As well as the inclination of whole *Ummah* towards the importance of *Hadith* and its publication and popularity in *Ummah*, all these evidences are indicating that, after the holy *Qur'an* it is the most important source of Islam, completely preserved for the coming generations. It is a great feature which reflects that it is a true religion which is revealed and protected by Allah and yet it is in its original form yet. No effects of time and space has degraded its genuinity.

To promote doubts regarding the authenticity of *Hadith* is a dreadful conspiracy against Islam. Side by side he advised Muslims to rely on *Sahih Ahadith* (Authentic) in practice and possibly avoid the *Zaeef* (weak) traditions. *Zaeef* traditions played

the most important role behind the occurrence of turmoils, conflicts and doubts and controversies in Islamic history. There is no *Noor* (light), clarity and reality or promise and support of Allah to *Modhu* and *Zaeef Ahadith*, as compared to the *Qur'an* and *Sahih Ahadith* (Authentic *Ahadith*). In addition to this, there are many illogical concepts in these traditions, as a result, different types of doubts and controversies have emerged within the Faith. Muslims should consult only authentic traditions even in *Fazail-e-Amal* (Virtues of fair deeds). Hence, the other works on *Hadith* are not equivalent to *Siha-e-Sittah*, because *Siha-e-Sitta* is undisputedly recognized by the majority of *Ummah*. Therefore, Muslims should only rely on *Siha-e-Sittah*. It is seen whenever Muslims believed in weak *Ahadith* and practiced it, people presented very low opinion on Islam.. The third part deals with the works of Ali Miyan. I have tried my best to discuss each of his works related to *Hadith* and presented his different aspect of thought included in them.

The chapter five deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Tasawwuf*. He himself was a great Sufi and asserted a great emphasis on its significance in a Muslim life. In this Chapter, we dealt with his introduction and adherence to *Tasawwuf*, his progress in later life and his moderate logical approach to it. In general, we can divide the spiritual life of Ali

Miyan in four stages. The first stage was that when he joined Khawaja Gulam Muhammad Dinpurvi and after his death Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In second stage, he joined Maulana Ilyas and his Tableeghi Movement after the death of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the third stage, he joined Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri after the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in 1944. In the fourth stage, he joined Shaykhul *Hadith* Maulana Muhammad Zakariya after the death of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri. This shows that Ali Miyan has a long and through experience of *Tasawwuf*.

As an expert, his thoughts regarding *Tasawwuf*, give a new look to the discipline. The expression of his thoughts and strong advocacy of his opinion balanced by logical reasoning presents '*Tasawwuf*' or spiritual education is essential for the development of moral character and personality of a man. So, extreme devotion to Allah is an interesting goal and crucial factor to produce men of morality in Islamic history.

Ali Miyan had a deep insight in theory and practice of *Tasawwuf*. He was not merely a scholar but a leading personality in the area. However, he was the disciple of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori yet he was, impressed by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed's Sufi thought. He considered him as his role model in *Tasawwuf*. Ali Miyan was also influenced by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah

Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi. Ali Miyan's approach regarding *Tasawwuf* was balanced and clear. He considered *Tasawwuf* as an essential factor in developing the true spirit of religion in a man. According to him, *Tasawwuf* plays a vital role in the development of great Muslim personalities throughout Islamic history. Knowledge only cannot make men of high morals and pious character, purification of the heart and mind is equally necessary for one's personality development, which can easily be attained through *Tasawwuf*. To him, *Tasawwuf* is a prime part of religion required for the development of high moral values in its followers. He also termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin* (inner jurisprudence). To Ali Miyan, *Tasawwuf* is as old as Islam. All the Prophets (pbut) practiced it. It is the essence of Faith and the soul of Islam. Its basic ingredients are consciousness and a living realization of the omnipotence of Allah (*Tauheed*) in all its implications, adoption and love of Allah, purification of the heart and righteousness. It constitutes the very base of religion. It calls upon man to inculcate in himself the qualities of piety, sincerity, patience, steadfastness, and gratitude to Allah. Alongside, it should not be judged, by the conduct of fraudulent pretenders or worldly men calling themselves, Sufis, so, there are false Ulama who are to be avoided according to *Hadith*.

Tasawwuf is not a *Qur'anic* word nor can it be found in *Hadith* literature but other words, can be found which are equivalent to it, like “Tazkiya” in the *Qur'an*, and “Ahsan” in *Hadith*. These are some groups of people which opposed *Tasawwuf*. One group comprises those who accept its constituents separately, but deny it if it is referred to as a whole. The majority of the people applaud the aforementioned aim and qualities separately, but if it be said to them that, Some people have for some reasons given all these qualities a common name “*Tasawwuf*”, then their colours change instantly and they say, ‘We don’t believe in *Tasawwuf*, it has caused great harms’. The other group is of those to whom it is acceptable if it proposed under a different name. For example if it is said, “The *Qur'an* has termed it ‘*Tazkiyah*’ (cleaning). The *Hadith* names it ‘*Ahsan*’, and later jurists termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin*”. They would then reply that there is no reason for contradiction and all these are declarations of Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

Verily, neither alterations can make to all the books written, nor the tongues of men can be withheld. Otherwise, if we were given the option, we should have referred to it by the words ‘*Tazkiyah*’ and ‘*Ahsan*’ and not used the word ‘*Tasawwuf*’. Now this is the popular name. Likewise, the history of the arts and sciences is full of such common technical terms. In the end

of the Chapter Fourth, I discussed some of his works related to the West and tried to put forward his thought incorporated in them.

The sixth chapter deals with Ali Miyan's thought regarding *Fiqh*(Islamic Jurisprudence). Though he was not a *Faqih* and left no separate work related to the subject but he discussed briefly about *Fiqh* and its related issues in his different books and papers. Ali Miyan's approach was rational and moderate unlike the traditional Ulama who were rigid and radical regarding Islamic Jurisprudence. Though, he was a Hanafite and firmly practiced his Maslak (creed), yet he condemned the rigid outlook. To him, different schools of thought in Islamic Jurisprudence reflect the diversity of Islamic culture. No one of them is more preferable to the other. The conflict among different schools of jurisprudence is Un-Islamic and an act of Ignorance.

The establishment of *Fiqh* is very important Islamic event. It is an outstanding characteristic of Islam that, it provides such a diversified look to Islamic Jurisprudence. It is a heavenly occurrence because Allah is willing for establishment of *Fiqh*. So that, Islam will be able to solve, every problem related to human life in every age till the last day. It is not merely an imagination but it is a matter of fact. It can be observed that in the Middle Ages, when Islam spread to vast areas and great kingdoms were

established under its flag, new issues were faced due to diversified culture, these new issues dealt with Judiciary, Social and Political issues such as Taxation, *Zimmis*, *Kharaj*, and Inheritance etc. The great Jurists of the time solved these quests without any delay. It was not done on a small scale rather four regular schools of Jurisprudence were established. This vast and tremendous work of extracting solutions of legal issues according to Islamic *Shariah* by a large number of *Fuqaha* (Jurists) was inclusive. Therefore, there is no need of *Ijtihad* on the issues, which were already solved by these great jurists. He believed that, these eminent jurists of the Middle Ages were experts of the field and their work was matchless as well as profound. It is worthless to make efforts on the issues that previously solved by these eminent jurists. In addition, it is dangerous for the Muslim *Ummah*, because there is a doubt of rising of controversies and new sects with it. However, with admiring the great services of those eminent Jurists of the past, he did not overlook the significance and need of *Ijtihad* on new arising issues. Because Islam is fully compatible to the changing world and it is necessary to discuss and solve these new issues, therefore *Ijtihad* is the requirement of the day. He think that, in every age of Islamic history, the method of *Ijtihad* was used by great Jurists to find out the solution of new issues in the light of *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Till date, the importance of *Ijtihad* hasn't decrease because in the

modern world due to the rapid development of Science and Technology, and changing life style new issues continuously arise. Therefore, it strongly needed, to discuss and solve them according to the Islamic *Shariah*. In addition, the Islamic *Shariah* should be written in modern style and updated regularly, so that it is not claimed that Islamic *Shariah* is outdated. However, *Ijtihad* should be done according to its rules and limits, encoded by the expert jurists.

He always hated and discouraged rigid approach regarding *Fiqh*. Once he visited a Hanafite Madrasah and stayed there for three days as a guest. He was informed that, ‘*Due to performing Rafa-Yadin and saying Ameen loudly, during Salat by a student, the authorities of the Madrasah terminated the student*’. Ali Miyan intentionally performed *Rafa-Yadin* and said *Ameen* loudly all the time during his stay at the *Madrasah* though he was a Hanafite himself.

Due to the reason of his moderate and liberal approach, he was popular and admired by all Juristic schools equally, not only in India but also in the entire Islamic world. The intellectuals from all schools of Jurisprudence have appreciated his reformist ideas openheartedly. Non-Hanfites like, Arab scholars, politicians and even people of the masses, have admired him.

The Seventh chapter deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding the west. This chapter encompasses most of his thoughts and Ideas. Because his greatest anxiety was to present true figure of Islam to the West so that it can be adopted by the West. To him despite of all scientific and technical advancements the Western culture is devoid of spiritual peace and satisfaction. There is no or very little space for spiritual sense in the Western culture due to the reason of it adopted the Materialistic way of life. To him, the most dreadful evil of the West is their extreme dependence on “*Materialism*” and denying “*Spirituality*”. Because the source of Western civilization is Greek civilization. And the Greek civilization was purely materialistic and there is very little scope for spirituality in it. The Greeks did not believe in God without giving him physical forms and shapes, and making images of his attributes and installing them in their temples. A logical list on ten kinds of gods with different shapes and “Categories” was included in Aristotle’s writings.

He also termed the *Materialism* as *Modern Irreligiousness*. Materialism elevates natural resources, technological contrivances and professional expertise to the level of Allah. Man has today pinned his hope in material objects and thrown himself on the mercy of specialists and experts. For success and failure, prosperity and adversity, honour and infamy, life and death of

nations have now been committed to the case of one expert or the other. The arrogant spirit of extreme phenomenalism, the reverence for materialism and physical forces, and the overwhelming confidence in experts, scientists and technologists are the new forms of irreligiousness, invested with a halo, which makes them partners of Allah. These are supposed to be sharers of Divinity, the new Gods of modern age. Ali Miyan judge the moral declining of the West appropriately he emphasized, the coupling of moral and religious depravity with a phenomenal progress in the scientific and industrial fields led to the creation of a striking disparity between power and ethics. Men learnt to fly in the air like birds and to swim in the water like fish, but they forgot how to walk straight on the earth. Undisciplined knowledge and unenlightened wisdom furnished every highwayman with a sword. Deadly weapons were placed in untrained hands, which repeatedly plunged the world into horrible blood baths. Now Science has given the atomic and Hydrogen bombs to humankind as a weapon for suicide. We enabled to travel very fast from place to place, but places to which we travel are diminishing the worth to travel. Distances destroyed and nations brought to one another's doorsteps, with the result that international relations are getting worse, and the strains and stresses engendered by these new facilities for knowing our neighbours engulf our world in war. The invention

of broadcasting enabled us to speak to neighbouring nations, with the result that, each nation exhausts its resources for irritating its neighbours. By attempting to convince others, of the superiority of its form of government. All of today's inventions; the aircrafts humming in the sky, the knowledge of mathematics, dynamics, mechanics, familiarity with electricity and internal combustion, ingenuity in the application of knowledge, the skill in the working of woods and metals, suggest that their inventors were supermen. Now consider the purposes for which the modern aircrafts has been, and then notice how increasingly they are used to drop bombs to shatter, choke, burn and dismember, defenceless people. These, are the purposes of either idiots or devils. Hence, it should be noted that the Islamic attitude is different with regard to modern technological development, it doesn't deny totally the use of new sciences and technologies, but rather credits it as a blessing and mercy from Allah.

Ali Miyan advised Muslims to carry out their duty. The Muslims could discharge their sacred obligation only when they are able to produce in themselves that strength of Faith and courage of conviction skill and sincerity, which can repulse the onslaught of imitative tendencies and glittering catchwords and overcome the petty considerations of immediate gain, both individual and collective. For this their leaders too, will have to

make the necessary sacrifices, but even from the personal point of view these sacrifices will not be in vain.

In the end, I discussed some books of Ali Miyan, which reflects his thought to the West.

The Chapter eight deals with the Religio-political thought of Ali Miyan. In the above discussions, we clearly mentioned that the greatest anxiety of Ali Miyan was to present the true message of Islam to others. For this purpose, he toured many places both in the country and abroad and delivered many lectures to remove misconceptions against Islam in the minds of common people. Many of these lectures were compiled later in the form of books. Ali Miyan believed, Islam to be the only solution to the crisis of the present world. Ali Miyan's exposition of Religion (Islam) was marked by Moderation. He was not a fanatic in any sense of the term and believed in Islam as a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor in human history. To him, Islam is a civilization force, which has retained its relevance even in the modern age, and is a viable counterpart to the Western civilization with all its excuses. The West has made tremendous progress in the fields of Science and Technology. Everybody welcomes scientific development but the misuse of it is very dangerous and is a great threat to our civilization. Mostly Westerns are materialistic. Though they are Ahl-e-Kitab, yet

they have little faith on their own revealed books. Due to ego problems, they do not accept Islam, though they know Islam is the complete final form of religion. There is a need for the faith, to provide a bright future to humanity and this can alter the prevailing situation. For this purpose, Islam is the most appropriate religion in all dimensions. In addition, Ali Miyan addressed the whole *Ummah*, particularly the Muslim elite and Arabs with these words, “We should feel the pain of Humanity. We can only cure it through the teachings of the Messengers (pbut). Because, the way that was adopted by Messengers (pbut) is the best one”. In every speech and congregation, Ali Miyan demonstrated, the way adopted by Messengers (pbut) in different ages for the reformation of society. It was their divine duty to take on their responsibilities and convey the message of Islam to humankind. Ali Miyan had tried his best to convince non-Muslims that they were in the wrong path, and if they did not accept the true message of Allah then, they would have to face its consequences on the Day of Resurrection. If they accepted Islam, they would enjoy everlasting peace in Paradise. Ali Miyan yearns to remind the entire humanity, the status and responsibilities of a man. According to him, men may be divided into many communities, like Religious, National, and Tribal, but the most durable relation between humans is that of “*Humanity*”. All the Prophets (pbut) and Sufi Saints adopted this method of

reforming the society. In every age, it gave positive results and reformist achievements to human beings.

At a very young age, he began to convey the divine message of Islam among the Indian people. His greatest anxiety was to protect every human being from the eternal loss of the hereafter.

For this very purpose, he met Dr. Ambedkar and conveyed to him this divine message. At that time, Maulana Ali Miyan was merely a youth of only 22. He did not succeed, yet he continued this divine mission throughout life. When Indian history took a serious turn, with the partition in 1947, differences started increasing among the different faiths in India. Ali Miyan was very anxious to cure this, and to unify the nation on common grounds. Consequently, this was the theme, included in his every speech and writing. To quote Ali Miyan, "it is the responsibility of every citizen of India, to make efforts to bridge up the void between the people of different faiths. If, serious circumstances occur, every individual will suffer. Even the educational institutions, industrial establishment and expensive markets will not remain untouched.

Realizing that the Muslim community was with numerous problems that demanded a political solution, Ali Miyan forced himself, against his will, to enter politics. However, he was a

stranger to the world of politics. A sudden burst in violent attacks against Muslims instigated by Hindus, in which, scores of Muslims lost their lives, as well as the continuing discrimination of the government to Muslims, forced him to turn his attention to politics from 1964 onwards. At a time when the role of the state had extended into almost every sphere of personal and collective life, he wrote, “The Muslims could not afford to remain aloof from politics. To do so would be tantamount to collective suicide, for they would not be able to protect their identity, their personal laws, their religious traditions, and even their lives, in the face of the growing threat of Hindu aggression as well as the Hinduisation of the state”. When Hindus began a mass, nation-wide campaign to destroy the mosque, promoting anti-Muslim emotions and violence, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing a public statement calling for peace and tolerance, pleading that the matter be resolved through constitutional means. At a peace rally in Lucknow in 1990, he said, “in the face of mounting Hindu militancy, Muslims must respond by turning to Allah, refraining from sin, inviting non-Muslims to Islam and adopting the path of steadfastness, tolerance and bravery”. In the wake of the destruction of the *Babri* mosque in December 1992, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing another appeal for calm. He called for the reconstruction of the mosque on its original site, a ban on all organizations preaching communal hatred, and a storm-like

movement for promoting inter-communal harmony and patriotism. He bitterly criticized the action of some Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh who reacted to the destruction of the *Babri* mosque by attacking Hindu temples there. He condemned this as a negation of the teachings of Islam. Ali Miyan said, "Adding that, in the present situation, Muslims in these countries should protect their non-Muslim minorities and serve as a model for Hindus in India, to be emulated by their own minorities".

Ali Miyan taught the Indian Muslims how they could live in a religiously plural society in such a way that their beliefs could remain free from the stain of communal prejudices and conflict, while at the same time being in harmony by respecting each other's religious beliefs.

He insisted that rather than being a barrier in the path of Islamic missionary work, Muslims should be facilitators. Due to these circumstances, which have been discussed earlier, Maulana Ali Miyan with some of his companions established a reformist movement in 1944. Which was later named as "*Payam-e-Insaniyat*" (Message of Humanity). The very purpose of this movement was to bridge up the void among different faiths, to clarify the misunderstandings against Islam, to convey the revealed message to humanity with peace. Till today, this

movement is working successfully. In the end, we have discussed some of his works related to missionary work in the West.

In the Ninth chapter, we have discussed some of Ali Miyan's most famous works, which focused on the Islamic Thought of Ali Miyan. Among them, the first one is *Maza khasir al alam bil Inhitatil Muslimeen (Islam and the World)*. This is the most famous book of Ali Miyan. Actually, it is brief review of history in which Ali Miyan tried to explain the Pre-Islamic period and its evils and after that he discussed the emergence of Islam and its revolutionary consequences on the lives of un-civilized, Arabs and they turned to most virtuous society in the world. He discussed these consequences in detail and afterwards he discussed the decline and causes of decline of Islamic world and its dreadful consequences on the whole world. According to Ali Miyan whole world suffered by the decline of Islamic world. After *Islam and the world*, I discussed some of his other books in brief which reflects his Islamic thought.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi wanted to preserve the doctrine of Islam in its own original form according to the spirit of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This spirit will help non-Muslims to understand Islam easily and will embrace Islam *Inshallah*. There is no doubt that his study and knowledge about vast Islamic literature and world history, was

immense. That is why he was able to analyze thoroughly the present conflict between Islam and modern World Order. To him the Muslims and Non-Muslims, both were responsible for unrest. On the one hand, he criticized the Materialistic thought of the West and its increased desire to worldly comforts. He termed it as Tehzeebi Jahiliyat (Cultural Ignorance). He visited European countries many time and delved many lectures in which he highly appreciated the technological advancement of the West, but simultaneously he pointed out the shortcomings of their culture. He argued with historical evidences that the reformation of modern society is only possible with the method of Holy Messengers (pbut). The only solution of current unrest is to adopt Islam; Because Islam is the greatest caller of spirituality. All the technological advancement is useless or even destructive if there is no sense of morality in the possessor. Because if there is a man with no morality, when these advance equipments come into his hands most probably he will make misuse of them. That is why despite of tremendous advancement in the field of science and technology the society is more unsafe than earlier. Every time there is a fear of nuclear war among great powers. Millions of innocent lives, sacrificed brutally just for the protection of the selfish interests of few wealthy people or Nations, with the use of advance deadly weapons.

While on the other hand Ali Miyan criticized the present role of Muslim *Ummah*, in failing the true figure of Islam to others, which resulted in the emergence of grave misunderstanding against Islam. This is because of their negligence of the responsibility of *Khair-al-Ummah* (best of community). This neglect proved itself very harmful for the Muslim *Ummah* as well as for the entire Humanity.

However, he was not rigid in his attitude nor he discarded the Western culture totally. To him there are many good traditions in West which were borrowed from Islam and Muslims should adopt them.

He also severely criticized the neglect of the importance of scientific development by Muslims, which resulted in lagging behind of Muslim *Ummah* in the field of Science and Technology. This is the cause of the great misunderstanding that Islam discourages technological development. He described an incident that a hot air filled balloon was flying above the city of Istanbul in the 17th century, people were seeing it surprisingly and they thought that it is a supernatural thing.

Above all the most distinctive feature of Ali Miyan's thought is "Moderateness". However, he was firm in his faith and practice but always keen to seek compromising possibilities with

others. He was not in favour of imposing his thought on others by force but by convincing them. On the subject he wrote a book entitled “*Asr-e-hazir me deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh*”. In addition he criticize the rigid attitude of the people particularly some Islamic scholars, by whose behaviour the hostility emerges against Islam. He termed it an act of Ignorance (*Jahiliyah*).

Finally, we can conclude that the Islamic thought of Ali Miyan is truly Islamic, liberal and moderate. His Islamic thought is multi-dimensional and thought provoking. Maulana has critically examined all aspects of human civilization in the light of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). We have critically evaluated Ali Miyan's thought on, Tafsir writing of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith literature, Tasawwuf and Tasawwuf literature, Islamic Fiqh, Western civilization and his own religio-political thought. He was a great socio-religious reformer of the twentieth century. Maulana thinks, Islam is moderate and most suitable for all the times till the day of resurrection. Islam is the final form of religion. If we failed to understand the spirit of the religion, this is our own fault. We should not blame Islam. Ali Miyan urged the Muslims to follow the doctrines of Islam perfectly and present the same to non-Muslims, so that they will be impressed and embrace Islam. This is the need of the hour. According to Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, the materialistic

approach of the West is very dangerous and will destroy the world civilization. For peaceful co-existence and to establish peace in the world, West should accept and practice the doctrines of all revealed books of Allah and instructions of His Prophets (pbut). Spiritual education is also the need of the hour to establish ^{Peace} in the World.



Phones : Ext. 2701131, Int. 1365,1366
Fax : 0571-2700528

DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH-202 002 (INDIA)

Dated June 25, 2010

Certificate

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled “**A critical study of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi’s Islamic thought**” submitted by **Mr. Zubair Zafar Khan**; under my supervision is his own original research work and suitable for submission for the award of the degree of Ph.D. in Islamic Studies.

Further, certified that Mr. Zubair Zafar Khan has been engaged in full-time research and that he has put in required attendance as prescribed by the University.

Dr. Muhammad Ismail

Associate Professor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All the praises and thanks to Allah, the Almighty creator and sustainer of the World, who made it possible to complete this Doctoral study.

I would like to thank most sincerely to my supervisor Dr Muhammad Ismail, who took a personal interest in my research proposal. It was his encouragement that I undertake a critical analysis of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's Islamic Thought. No proper research can be done without a supportive guide. However, in my case my supervisor has been more than a director to me. I do not hesitate to state that my success in this humble attempt is due to his encouragement, generous availability and timely advice.

It will be sheer injustice, if not to be thankful to Maulana Bilal Hasani Nadwi (nephew of Ali Miyan) who greatly appreciated my topic of Research and provide me valuable knowledge about particular aspects of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's thought which I don't find in any book. And no less indebted I am to the authorities of Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama, which give me permission to consult their library for weeks and provided me precious knowledge and research material for my work, in addition they accommodate me in their special guest house.

In addition, I express my indebtedness to the Chairman of the Department of Islamic Studies Prof. Zafarul Islam for his generous support in administrative matters and he is a great source of inspiration during my research work. I am also thankful to Prof. Mahmudul Haq, Prof. Azduddin Khan, Prof. M Salim Qidwai, Prof. Kabir Ahmad Jaisi,

Prof. Yasin Mazhar Siddiqui, Prof. Abdul Ali, all were former Chairmen, Department of Islamic Studies, A.M.U. Aligarh, they are my great sources of Inspirations. I should also thank Prof. Sayyid Ahsan, former Chairman, department of Islamic Studies AMU, Aligarh, for he is also a great source of my inspiration. I am also thankful to Dr Obaidullah Fahad, Dr Ahsanul Haq, Dr Abdul Hamid Fazili, Dr Adam Malik Khan, and Dr Abdul Majid Khan who encouraged me in this project. A special thanks to library staffs of Maulana Azad Library and the Library of the Department of Islamic Studies, particularly Mr. Kabir Ahmad Khan who greatly helped me to access my related material easily.

My deepest gratitude and thanks to my family members for their unflagging love and support throughout my academic career. It is a great pleasure to thank, my maternal grandfather, Late Janab Mehdi Hasan and maternal grandmother Mrs. Badar Jahan who used to encourage me since my childhood days, to require knowledge and obtain higher education.

I feel great pleasure to thank my parents Janab Zafar Ahmad Khan and Muhtarima Nazima Parveen who are my real sources of inspiration to pursue Ph.D. in Islamic Studies. Finally, by the grace of Allah I have completed this work.


Zubair Zafar Khan

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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Background

Throughout the history of Islam, 20th century has an outstanding significance for two great events, which never occurred before, among them, the fall of Khilafat in Turkey and the rise of European powers and their domination in the fields of arms, natural sciences, and technology. Because, till the fall of Khilafat, Islamic powers dominate the world in these fields and it was the first occasion in the whole Muslim history that the Khilafat was abolished totally.¹ These two events shaken the whole Muslim world but with these worse catastrophes the most important aspect which impulse Islam with fresh endeavor is that, most of the reformist movements emerged during this period. In India due to the fall of Mughal rule and transformation of ruling power from the hands of Muslims to others, Indian Muslim society filled with chaos and pessimism. At this critical moment, many Muslim intellectuals and reformist movements were emerged to fill the void and to revive the Islamic faith in India. Among those famous movements was Khilafat movement, Deoband movement, Ahl-e-Hadith, Jamat-e-Islami, Tableeghi Jamat, Aligarh movement, movement of Nadwatul Ulama, etc.

Among the great personalities during this period were Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, Maulana Qasim Nanutavi, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi etc. Among these great Islamic luminaries, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (Ali Miyan) has an outstanding position, not only in India but also in the Islamic world particularly in the Arab world. Maulana Ali Miyan was a great socio-religious reformer of the 20th century. His reformist ideas well accepted not only by the Muslims, even non-Muslims admired his personality. He was a versatile genius and a prolific writer. It is true to say that Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was a great scholar, world-renowned thinker, Sufi reformer, profound theologian, high ranked educationist, as well as farsighted historian. He was entitled as “*Mufakkir-e-Islam*”.² His words and writings revive the faith in the hearts of the millions of the Muslims. He authored around 50 books. Which are wide extended, focused, thought provoking and covered almost all aspects of Islamic sciences and Muslim history and culture. Most of his works have been translated in several languages.

The title of this doctoral project is “*A Critical Study of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi’s Islamic Thought*”. Even though,

some works are available on Maulana Ali Miyan, but no critical work, has so far done on Maulana Abul Hasan Nadwi's Islamic Thought. The books, monographs, magazines, reviews, research papers, seminar proceedings, lectures on Ali Miyan and with the help of contemporary scholars and works of Ali Miyan this research work is persuaded. He was a great Islamic intellectual of 20th century, and had clear-cut approach on every aspect of Islamic discipline. However, he was a Hanafite Alim (Scholar), received his education from *Madrasah*, but was too liberal in his attitude to others. We cannot declare him as a rigid traditional scholar. He always keen to seek possibilities to convene with others on common grounds leaving the controversies behind. In every aspect, his approach was balanced and flexible. He considered Islam as a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor in human history. It is the only way of guidance for humankind in the modern age.³ All disturbances of the current period are due to the leaving the Islamic teachings and adopting the un-Islamic ways of life. It is an innovative work and a fresh addition in the field of Islamic thought. It will help in exploring the possibilities of seeking the pluralistic Islamic attitude of Islam, which is a great requisite of modern era.

Research Techniques

Chapter first deals with the general introduction of the project. We have discussed our aims and objects of research and purpose of the study and the significance of the topic. Then we have discussed the research techniques. In the end, we have discussed the major sources of the work in detail.

The second chapter is on Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's life achievements. This chapter highlights his early education and family background and circumstances. A sincere attempt has been made in this chapter to introduce his ancestors and family members with their academic and reformist contributions. However, what presented here about his ancestors is too little and it calls for separate volumes.

The main body of the thesis, started from the third chapter. An attempt has been made on describing his education of the *Qur'an* and different aspects of his thought regarding *Qur'an* and its interpretation (*Tafsir*). However, he does not write a complete *Tafsir* of the *Qur'an* but variously he interpreted some chapters like *Surah-al-Kahaf* and some other verses. In these commentaries, he elaborated his own ideas with his unique way of interpretation. We have tried, as far as possible to present his ideas with quotations from the original text. The whole material

of this chapter arranged in such a way as to get a complete picture of his *Qur'anic* thought. In later chapters, his thought regarding *Hadith* (Prophetic Traditions), *Tasawwuf* (Sufi thought or Islamic spiritual education), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) etc, analyzed in the same manner.

In the chapters, seventh and eighth, we have tried to discuss his missionary and political ideas and activities as well as his attitude towards the western civilization. However, he condemns the western civilization but not discard it totally. What he opposed is the “totally *materialistic approach*” of the West. To him it is the greatest evil of the Western Society, which tends to engulf the whole World. However, he appreciated the technological advancement of the West, and severely criticized, Muslims to their ignorance in the fields of Science and Research. In the last chapter, we have analyzed some of his important works and tried to explore and present a complete figure of Ali Miyan’s Islamic thought. At the end of every chapter, we have given critical remarks.

Magazines and reviews published from the different Islamic Institutes particularly from the Nadwatul Ulama provided very useful information on this topic. Finally, we have made a few concluding remarks on the whole project and on the question of its significance and relevance to the Modern Age. This

dissertation, divided into nine chapters with a concluding remarks and with rather an elaborated bibliography. This study being the first of its kind and this is my original research work and a critical study.

Sources of the work

Our struggle regarding realistically chapterising this study has been the most painstaking and time consuming one, because of the fact that the most of the works of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi were devoid of any chapter-wise breakup according to our topic. His ideas found scattered in his various books and articles. However, libraries and resourceful scholars were the main sources of our information. It gives us a great satisfaction to mention that we have tried our level best to collect data from all possible sources. Here we are introducing some of the most consulted sources, which provided us authentic information related to the topic. The foremost among them is Ali Miyan's autobiography titled *Carvan-e-Zindagi*. It is a detailed life account of Ali Miyan, which provides information of almost every aspect of Ali Miyan's life and thought. Ali Miyan's motivation for writing his autobiography is not merely to recount memorable milestones in his life but to provide an all-encompassing spectrum of his activities that delineates his intellectual growth and development, the historical incidents in his life. The book

provides the reader an opportunity to examine Ali Miyan's role in the said events, in which Ali Miyan was an active participant. Furthermore, his autobiography makes copious reference to his prolific writings to highlight his contribution to contemporary Islamic thought. The *Carvan-e-Zindagi* also attempts to explore Ali Miyan's vision and thought regarding Islam and humanity as well as what was his attitude for the renaissance of Islam in the modern age. The book is very interesting and informative, because Ali Miyan does not confined only to the events, related to him personally but he mentioned the social and political state of affairs of his era. Since both the freedom of India and the partition of India, occurred during his lifetime, therefore he has covered all of these happenings according to his own view. His concentration lies in not only the political scenario but also the remarkable events such as, the starting of reformist movements and institutions like Jamat-e-Islami, Tableeghi Jamat, Ikhwanul Muslimeen, Uniterialn movement of Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, Madrasah Darul-uloom Deoband and Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama etc. Beside all of this, he has also illustrated short life sketches of famous contemporary personalities and his own experience with them, like Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, Allama Iqbal, Maulana Ilyas Kandhlawi, Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri etc. Rightly, we can say this autobiography has included many little biographies of famous Muslim personalities. Besides

all this he has illustrated his memorable journeys to other countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Great Britain, USA, Rangoon, Kuwait, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Turkey and Spain etc. Simultaneously, he discusses in brief the history, religious and social conditions of Muslims in these countries and his personal impression of them. For example, when he visited Spain, the country in which the Muslims had ruled for over eight centuries, he visited all famous historical monuments of Muslims and exposed his emotions in the book.

The second most significant work which help us in exploring Ali Miyan's thought is his famous book '*Islam and the world*' which is an English version of "*Maza Khasir al-Alam bil inhitatil Muslimeen*"(Arabic). In this book, Ali Miyan tried to cover a brief account of the rise and fall of Muslims and it's consequences on the humankind. Ali Miyan eloquently expressed his thought and ideas to readers in such a bold manner that the reader can comprehend his Islamic thought thoroughly. In the beginning of the book, Ali Miyan cherished the Muslims of the Arabia and their rise to power, their enthusiasm towards Islam, their contribution towards human civilization and their zeal for the promotion of Islam. After the glorious period of Islam, author highlights the decadence of Muslim power because of their luxurious life and they lost original fervor to Islam, due to

which later Muslim rulers became the victim of their enemies and downfall came to existence. In the end Ali Miyan provoked Muslims particularly Arabs to admit their responsibility of the guidance of humankind towards the true path of Islam.

The third most valuable work of Ali Miyan, which provided precious information related to the topic is *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, in English *Saviors of Islamic spirit*. It is another voluminous work of Ali Miyan. Originally, it is a collection of lectures delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, at Lucknow, under the title “*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*”. As it is obvious from the title, this work consists of the biographies of few towering personalities of Islamic history who were regarded as “*Revivalists of Islam in their ages*”. During the long span of thirteen hundred years of its existence, Islam underwent different phases. Sometimes it emerged as a strongest political and intellectual power and sometimes it became too weak to think of its recovery. According to Ali Miyan reformers, leaders and scholars produced by Islam during its sovereignty were of no more higher caliber than those born in its age of decadence. The book outlines that, there have been a continuous chain of great revivalist personalities throughout Islamic history. Whenever, the religion of Allah attacked either, from within or from outside, Allah sends men of the hour equipped with the right

kind of scholarship and spiritual strength to correct the wrongs of the age and show the way. Therefore, in this book he presented the continuous history of the revival of Islam through the biographies of these great revivalists. Because, in history we find only the events with Kings and Emperors or biographical accounts of certain eminent luminaries, but no account has been found, of the revivalist personalities and movements of Muslims and speculative achievements of those great servants who have left an indelible mark on Islamic world. These champions have bravely fought against the forces of corruption and *bidah* (innovations), defended the original Islamic precepts and teachings, and rejuvenated the true spirit of Islam along with making valuable contributions to the intellectual and academic treasures. The book present an account of these continuous efforts, made during the past thirteen hundred years, for reawakening the Muslims. It highlights the name of those eminent servants, who rose to the defense of Islam in order to arrest the onslaught of the evil forces and who gave rise to various movements for the purpose of upholding Islamic morals and values and finally their efforts made it possible for Islam to survive to this day. Most of them identified as Mujaddids (revivalists). Also, some important personalities mentioned in this book which cannot be called as Mujaddids but who have worked for the renovation and regeneration of the Islamic faith

and practice, and the subsequent generations of Muslims have ever remain indebted to them.

The fourth work of Ali Miyan, which assisted us in understanding his Islamic thought, is *Moarka-e-Iman-o-Maddiyat*. Originally, it is a detailed interpretation of *Surah-al-Kahaf*. The *Surah* demonstrates an unending struggle between the two Ideologies or concepts diametrically opposed to each other. One is *Materialism* and other is *Faith*. To Ali Miyan, at first, it seems that the people of faith will be defeated and materialistic people will win but the people of faith ultimately succeed in their objective. While the materialistics defeated at last. Therefore, the true believers in every age, like the companions of cave, given preference to their faith, righteous behavior and propinquity to Allah over worldly gains and material beliefs”.⁴ This is the moral lesson inherent in this *Surah*.

The fifth book of Ali Miyan which was mostly consulted is ‘*Nai dunya Amrica me saaf saf Baten*’. This is among one of the famous works of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. Originally, it is a collection of Maulana Ali Miyan’s lectures in USA.⁵ The English version of this book is entitled “*From the depth of heart in America*”. A number of Muslims from India, Pakistan and Arab countries had gathered to hear these sermons. Ali Miyan’s main advice to Muslims of USA was on, how to preserve their faith in such a

materialistic culture as America. In one sermon, he stated, “Brothers and sisters, you are not here merely to earn and spend. This any community can do. You are here to earn according to your need, but you must also know your status and should present before the Americans a new design of life. You should give the Azan which may stir their minds and offer Namaz (Salat), so that they may see and ponder over it”.⁶

In another place he states, “Today only the Muslims can give a message, but where are they? Has any Muslim country or community the courage to tell the Americans that “in the remembrance of Allah, only do the hearts find rest” Muslims no longer believe in themselves. How can they convey the message of divine unity to others, which they themselves have lost faith in the power and efficiency of Namaz, in the truth and veracity of the Kalima, in the control and authority of Allah over gain and loss, and in the pre-ordination of good and evil, and made the Americans providers of their daily bread? How can they tell them *‘there is no giver of sustenance, except Allah’*.”⁷

He further said, “First try to produce Faith within yourselves, perform Namaz and spend some time everyday in meditation, produce the warmth that has been destroyed by the smoke of factories, refresh your soul, set right the aim of your life, read the *Qur’an* daily, study the life of the Prophet (pbuh) and seek

light from it, and then convey the message of the religion of nature to the Americans”.⁸

Maulana Ali Miyan addressed not only Muslims; but also gave speeches in five leading American universities, Columbia, Harvard, Detroit, South California and Utah. He also gave Friday sermons in the prayer hall of the United Nations Headquarter and Jama Masjids of Detroit and Toronto. In these gatherings, he spoke frankly to the public and conveyed the message of Islam plainly to the Americans.

The other book, which proved a major source of the work, is *Daur-al-Hadith fi Taqween al-Majtama Al-Islami* (Role of *Hadith* in the promotion of Islamic climate and attitude).⁹ As obvious from the title, the lecture delivered for highlighting the importance of *Hadith* in daily life of a Muslim. Its role in the development of great Muslim personalities and revivalist movements, as well as its contribution in generating the Islamic mood and religious temper in common Muslims. At last, he unveiled the conspiracies of raising doubts in the minds of common Muslims regarding the authenticity of *Hadith*. Ali Miyan severely condemned these conspiracies and termed it as an act of the enemies of Islam. Ali Miyan said, “I have tried to keep before the mental attitude and psychology of the modern educated class whose outlook and understanding have been molded by the

writings of orientalists. It often asks, what is the practical utility of *Ahadith*? Why *Ahadith* deemed essential for everyday life of the Muslims? What would be the harm and what vacuum would create in the life of the individual Muslim and the community, at large if *Ahadith*, were given up altogether”.¹⁰ This is a brief introduction of the subject matter of the book. The book outlines a clear-cut figure of the thought of Ali Miyan related to *hadith* and *hadith* literature.

Books of other’s

There are several works commenced on Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi on different aspects of his personality. Among them were books, treatises, articles, special issues of Journals and Magazines etc. It will be too lengthy if we will discuss all of them here. However, we are discussing some most important among them. The foremost is *Sawaneh Mufakkir-e-Islam* written by Maulana Bilal Hasan Nadwi. It is a concise biography of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. We can say it as a short version of *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, however in some aspects it is more informative than *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, because it provides additional information of the events and occurrences of the last stages of Ali Miyan’s life. Because *Carvan-e-Zindagi* was completed many years before the death of Ali Miyan, so it is devoid the accounts of the last stages of Ali Miyan’s life. *Sawaneh Mufakkir-e-Islam* also contains some

testimonies of the great scholars and nobles in favour of Ali Miyan, which were not mentioned in *Carvan-e-Zindagi*.

The book *Khanwada-e-Alamullahi*, is another one which greatly helpful to our work. It was written by, Late Maulana Muhammad Saani Hasani. It contains precious information related to historical background of the ancestors of Ali Miyan. It contains short biographies of notable ancestors of Ali Miyan from Hazrat Hasan (maternal grandson of Prophet Muhammad) to present day members of the family.

The other most important source is the special issue of the Journal, *Fragrance of East* in January 2000, just after the death of Ali Miyan. It contains various articles, research papers and tributes of the great scholars, political leaders and contemporaries of Ali Miyan. Many eminent scholars contribute in that Journal and highlighted different aspects of Ali Miyan's personality and their experiences with Ali Miyan, in scholarly manner.

Beside above-mentioned books, we consulted several other books of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and other authors. We will mention all of them in the Bibliography.

Now we are naming some family members and contemporaries of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, which

provide useful information to our work. Among them, the foremost one is Maulana Bilal Hasani Nadwi, who is the nephew of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. He is an eminent scholar and close observer of the life of Ali Miyan. He also wrote a biography of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi titled *Sawaneh Mufakkir-e-Islam*, which we discussed earlier. He and other family members provided us a lot of valuable information orally and literature related to our topic on our returning from Takiya, District Raibareilly (hometown of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi). The library of Madrasah at Takiya was our remarkable destination, which have a precious treasure of the historical accounts of the memorable events of the family of Ali Miyan and incredible manuscripts. Therefore, we have collected a bulk of literature related to our topic from the library. The other major source of the work is Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama and its rich library. There are many contemporaries and students of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, which are working in the Madrasah and well informed about the life and thought of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. Among them, the foremost is Maulana Munawwar Sultan Nadwi¹¹ who provided a lot of information and literature related to our topic. Even he cooperated in exploring the important literature related to our topic from the library and other departments of the Madrasah, which was a difficult task for us without a guide. The other helpful persons were Maulana

Saeedur Rahman Azmi, Maulana Abdullah Hasani, Maulana Rabey Hasani, Mr. Anees Chishti etc. All of them provided incredible information to our topic, which is not available in books. The other major sources of the work are Maulana Azad Library and the Library of the Department of Islamic Studies of Aligarh Muslim University.

We also consulted internet, which provide significant data related to our topic. Below we are enlisting some of these URLs.

URL's

1. <http://darulislam.info/forum/showthread.php?t=3041>
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
3. <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
4. <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>
5. http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
6. http://www.counterterrorismnews.com/home/index.php?option=com_ccboard&view=postlist&forum=23&topic=31&Itemid=57

7. <http://www.nadwatululama.org/fragrance/characteroftheprophet.pdf>
8. <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601>
9. <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=733>
10. <http://abulhasanalinadwi.com/about-us.php>
11. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
12. <http://nadwi.net.in/e/maraje.htm>
13. <http://www.central-mosque.com/biographies/nadwi.htm>
14. <http://www.nadwatululama.org/tribute/tribute.htm>
15. <http://engagersindawah.blogspot.com/2009/02/maulana-syed-abul-hasan-ali-nadwi.html>
16. <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>
17. <http://www.librarything.com/author/nadviabulhasanali>
18. <http://www.fortunecity.com/greenfield/wilderness/631/alnadwi.html>
19. <http://ccm-inc.org/iqra/index.php?page=bio-abulhasannadvi>

20. <http://videos.desishock.net/1006391/Maulana-Abul-Hasan-Ali-Nadwi-in-Indore-2/4>
21. <http://www.milligazette.com/Archives/15-1-2000/Art17.htm>
22. <http://www.flipkart.com/author/shaykh-abul-hasan-ali-nadwi/>
23. http://irshad.org/info_m/writings/nadvia.php
24. <http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f18/world-islam-today-syed-abul-hasan-ali-nadwi-8036/>
25. http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1686?_hi=0&_pos=11
26. <http://tablighijamaat.wordpress.com/2008/06/12/biography-of-syed-abul-hasan-ali-nadwi/>
27. <http://www.suhaibwebb.com/islam-studies/a-weekend-with-shaykh-akram-nadwi-by-andrew-booso/>
28. http://www.twocircles.net/2008may17/nadwi_maududi_traditionalist_maulvi_s_critique_islamism.html
29. <http://www.pdfxp.com/nadwi-pdf.html>
30. http://www.flippid.com/item/1000189125/Guidance_from_the_Holy_Quran_Sayyid_Abu_l_Hasan_Ali_Nadwi
31. <http://unitethemuslims.com/?tag=abul-hasan>

32. http://www.usislam.org/islamicyouth/GreatMuslims/syed_abul_hasan_ali_nadvi.htm
33. <http://www.pdfqueen.com/islam-and-the-world-by-abul-hasan-ali-nadwi>
34. http://boardreader.com/thread/Shaykh_Abul_Hasan_info_needed_82jnXmdo.html
35. <http://wikimapia.org/640793/Moulana-Abul-Hasan-Ali-Nadvi-Academy>
36. <http://rockergameburnw.xorg.pl/abul-hasan>

CHAPTER : 1

Notes and References:

1. Uthmani caliphate was abolished in Turkey in 1914.
2. Means: thinker of Islam.
3. Shahabuddin, Syed, Defender of Islamic Identity, *The Fragrance of East*, January 2000, Lucknow: Academy of Journalism and Publicity, p. 85.
4. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Morka-e-Imaan-o-Maddiyat*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2004, p.6.
5. These lectures delivered upon a visit to USA in 1977 on the invitation of “*Muslim Students Association*” (M.S.A).
6. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nai Dunya Amrica me saf saf Baten*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2002, p.18.
7. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
8. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
9. Actually, the book is a text of a Presidential lecture in a convention of Rabita-Alam-e-Islami (World Muslim League) in 1981, by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.

10. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islami mizaj aur mahol ki tashkeel me Hadith ka bunyadi kirdar*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1990, pp. 66-69.
11. Maulana Munawwar Sultan Nadwi is a disciple of Ali Miyan and currently as teacher in Nadwatul Ulama

CHAPTER 2

MAULANA ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI'S EARLY LIFE

AND EDUCATION

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Family background

The family of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi traces its origin to Hazrat Hasan bin Ali [maternal grandson of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)]. The eldest son of Hasan was Hasan Musanna.¹ He was born in 651C.E, and was given the title “*Musanna*” meaning second, due to the reason that he closely matched his father in physique and morality. Hasan Musanna was married to Fatima Sugrah; daughter of Hazrat Husain bin Ali. Hasan Musanna had three sons. The eldest one was Abdullah al Muhiz. He had given the title ‘Shaykhul Itrah’.² He led a mutiny against the regime of the Abbasid Khalifa, Abu Jafar al Mansoor that resulted in the arrest of Abdullah al Muhiz. Subsequently he imprisoned until his death. Abdullah al Muhiz had six sons of which Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah was the most outstanding. He too waged a rebellion against Abu Jafar al Mansoor in Hijaz, which followed by the confrontation of both armies near Madinah. Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah killed in the battle.³ Abdullah al Ashtar a son of Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah, migrated to Kabul (Afghanistan) as a reason he was

entitled as Al-Kabuli, he was killed in a battle there in 768 C.E. Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah had many sons but two of them attained fame. They were Muhammad Thani al Asghar and Hasan.⁴ Muhammad Thani al Asghar migrated and settled down in Kufa and deputed as Naqeeb (in charge) of Kufa. Hasan al Jawwad, son of Muhammad Thani al Asghar was also a prominent man, succeeded his father as Naqeeb. The descendents of Hasan al Jawwad settled in different regions of west Asia. In the seventh generation, among his descendents who migrated to the region of Ahfad, a child was born who later achieved fame, as Shaykh Rashiduddin Ahmad al Madani.⁵ Shaykh Rashiduddin became a great Sufi saint of his time and had several disciples. His son Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad al Madani was a man of letters and power and lived in Madinah. One night Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) directed him in his dream, to proceed to India and serve the cause of Islam there. Therefore, he migrated to Ghazni, which was then, an important centre of Islam. There he collected an army of 18000 soldiers and attacked Kannauj, Manakpur and Katra, near Allahbad. Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad al Madani was given the title 'Shaykhul Islam', which was then a very prestigious title.⁶

With his family members and disciples, Qutubuddin Muhammad-al-Madani settled down in Katra. There he had

preached Islam and carried on his Islamic reformist activities among the locals and established an Islamic Society. The descendents of Qutubuddin Muhammad-al-Madani settled in different parts in India. About a century later one of his descendents, Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad Thani migrated to Jais, near Raibareilly from Katra.⁷ His son Sayyid Alauddin and grandson, Qazi Mahmud settled down in a nearby town, Naseerabad. Qazi Sayyid Mahmud had two sons: Qazi Sayyid Muhammad and Qazi Sayyid Ahmad. The son of Qazi Sayyid Ahmad, Sayyid Muhammad Muazzam was a religious person and a saint. Sayyid Muhammad Muazzam had two sons, Sayyid Muhammad Fuzail and Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq; both were great Islamic Scholars. Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Fuzail had two sons, Shah Muhammad Dawood and Shah Alamullah. Shah Alamullah was born on 12 September 721 C.E at Nasirabad. At the age of 17, he migrated to a nearby-uninhabited spot on the bank of River Sai.⁸

The descendents of Shah Alamullah; Maulana Sayyid Hidayatullah, Shah Ayatullah, Sayyid Muhammad Huda, Sayyid Shah Abu Hanifa, Sayyid Muhammad Ji, Shah Lal, Shah Muhammad, Maulana Qutub-al-Huda Muhaddis, Sayyid Abdul Baqi, Mir Muhammad Ahsan, Shah Muhammad Sabir, Sayyid Muhammad Noor, Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Talha Hasani,

Maulana Muhammad Zahir and Shah Zia-al-Nabi, they all were renowned legendary scholars and Sufis.⁹ However, the most distinct and famous among the descendents of Shah Alamullah was Shaykh-ul-Islam Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. He was a prominent Sufi and a great socio-religious reformer of India. He was also a freedom fighter, who fought against the British regime in India. His contribution to India's freedom is an incredible chapter in Indian History.¹⁰

Short biographies of the elders of Maulana Ali Miyan discussed below.

Paternal Grand Father

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's paternal grandfather was Hakim Sayyid Fakhruddin Khayali, who was the son of Maulana Sayyid Abdul Ali.¹¹ Maulana Sayyid Abdul Ali Naseerabadi was the son of Sayyid Ali Muhammad. Sayyid Ali Muhammad was among the descendents of Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq Naseerabadi. Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq was the uncle of Shah Alamullah.¹²

Hakim Sayyid Fakhruddin Khayali was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah* in the year 1840. He had lost his father at an early age and was brought up under the patronage of his maternal grandfather Maulana Muhammad Zahir and completed his education under Maulana Muhammad Naim Farangi Mahali.¹³

After completing his education, he traveled to many places such as Rajputana, Hyderabad, Bhopal and Tonk (Rajasthan) for earning a living as well as preaching Islam. Finally, he returned to his homeland and remained there till his death on 05 October 1908.¹⁴

Maternal Grandfather

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's maternal grandfather; 'Shah Zia-al-Nabi', was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah*, in the year 1826.¹⁵ He pursued early education in Raibareilly, then he went to Delhi for a spiritual training.¹⁶ After two years, he came back home, where he undertook Bait (oath) to Khwaja Ahmad Nasirabadi, after whose death he joined Khwaja Faizullah, under whom he completed his spiritual training.

In 1876, Shah Zia-al-Nabi performed Haj. He was a devout follower of Islam and his inclination towards prayers, recitation and meditation attracted people. His sincerity and devotion was commendable. He breathed his last in 1908.¹⁷

Father

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's father, Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah* on 18th of Ramadan 1869.¹⁸ He was brought up under the patronage of his

maternal grandmother, who was a disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed.¹⁹

He completed his schooling in Hanswa. There he learned Persian from Muhammad Taliq and Arabic from Shah Zia al Nabi. During this time, he became the disciple of a prominent Sufi, Maulana Fazlurrahman Moradabadi, after whose demise he completed the remaining course under Shah Zia-al-Nabi. He also corresponded with Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki, who declared him as his Khalifa (Successor).²⁰

In 1895, he joined Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher. Later, in 1915 he promoted as Principal. Always a busy academician, he taught *Tafsir*, *Hadith* Literature and Tibb. He married twice. His first wife, Sayyida Zainab, was the daughter of Maulana Sayyid Aziz Hansawi.²¹ She passed away when her only son, Sayyid Abdul Ali was of eight. Then Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani married to "*Sayyida Khairunnisa*" the daughter of Shah Zia-al-Nabi. He had two daughters and two sons, Dr Abdul Ali and Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.²²

Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani died on 2nd Feb, 1923 because of immediate severe illness.

Mother

The name of Ali Miyan's mother was 'Sayyida Khairunnisa'. She was also a poetess who wrote under the pen name "*Behtar*" (better).²³ Sayyida Khairunnisa was born in the year 1878. She was of a devout and religious temperament from childhood itself. Her father was a renowned Sufi, therefore under his guidance; she developed these traits still further. However, at that time there was not the tradition of girls memorizing the *Qur'an*, she was the first one to do so. Soon many other girls were inspired by this and followed her.²⁴

In the month of Ramadan separate *Taravih*²⁵ for women, were organized where Sayyida Khairunnisa used to recite the whole *Qur'an* orally, as Imam. These *Taravih* of women commenced through the permission of the Ulama of Farangi Mahal.²⁶ In the mean time, the former wife of Maulana Abdul Hai died, so his father proposed to Shah Zia-al-Nabi for the marriage of his son, Maulana Hakeem Sayyid Abdul Hai Hasani to his daughter, which he accepted. Since, Maulana Abdul Hai was not financially strong therefore, the mother of the girl was in a bit dilemma, but the daughter saw many cheerful dreams. One of which she usually quoted, "One Night I saw that I was granted a

verse from Almighty Allah and till I awake, continued to recite it repeatedly. The verse was:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

(Qur'an 32:17)

“Now no person knows what delights of the eyes are kept hidden (in reserves), for them (righteous persons) as a reward for their good deeds”. (Qur'an 32:17).

When I woke up, I was in fear, as I could not say it to anybody. In addition, I did not know the meaning of that verse. When I saw the meaning, I became extremely excited and the fear disappeared. I became proud of this blessing of Allah. I informed everyone. My father wept with joy”.²⁷

Shortly, she was married to Maulana Abdul Hai, and had three children; two daughters and the third a son; “Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi”. After the death of her husband, Sayyida Khairunnisa lived rest of the life as a widow. Her only desire was to make her son Ali Miyan a great man. For this, she prayed all the time.

At a place, she herself quotes, “The Prayer was like my food. Without prayer, I did not find fulfillment. All the time I was busy in prayer. I conversed also with prayers on my lips. On Friday I prayed all day, particularly between the time of *Asar* and

Maghrib I prayed with profound concentration”.²⁸ After the death of her husband she dedicated herself to religion. In the night, she got up to perform *Tahajjud* prayers. She wept and sobbed so much out of devotion that even her prayer clothe become soggy.²⁹ She passed her *Iddat*³⁰ period in Raibareilly. During *Iddat* and afterwards, she has only two jobs to pass time, one was to listen religious books and the other was worship and prayer. She died in Raibareilly, on 13th of August 1968 and laid to the rest in the family graveyard.

Elder brother, Dr Abdul Ali

Dr Abdul Ali was born in Hanswa on 1st December 1893. His early education completed in Hanswa. When he was only of eight, his mother died. In 1904 his father married for the second time, after which Abdul Ali came to Raibareilly where continued his further education.³¹

After some years, he went to Lucknow where he took admission in ninth class in a nearby school, from where in 1917 he finished Intermediate. In 1920, he took admission to M.B.B.S in King George Medical College. In 1923, his father passed away because of which he had some financial troubles. However, he completed his degree in 1925, a year later; he established a clinic near the old clinic of his father and rented a small house.³²

At the time of his father's death, Ali Miyan was only nine. Therefore, the contribution of Dr Abdul Ali in Ali Miyan's education and guidance was greatest after his mother. After the death of his father, in 1923, Dr Abdul Ali elected as a member of executive committee of Nadwa. In 1928, he appointed as Vice Principal and in 1931, he became Principal. From 1931 to 1961 he held the office.³³ He died on May 7, 1961, owing to a heart attack.³⁴

Family conditions at the time of Ali Miyan's birth

At the time of Ali Miyan's birth, the economic condition of the family was a bit fragile. At the time when Maulana Hakim Abdul Hai married for the second time, he was teaching without wages. There was no other source of earning. His grandfather was the only earning member and because of such financial crisis sometimes, the whole family went without food for an entire day.³⁵

Even the house was unfurnished and some of its parts damaged. Despite this, the whole family was religious and firm in belief. Most of the males were Ulama (Islamic scholars) and Huffaz (those who memorize *Qur'an*). The deeds of Late Shah Zia-al-Nabi (maternal grandfather of Ali Miyan) usually discussed in the family because he was a devout, pious and admired person.

He was a Sufi also and therefore nearly all of men and women around were his disciples.³⁶

Ali Miyan's Childhood

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was born on sixth Moharram 1332 A.H or 15th December 1913, in *Daira Shah Alamullah* the village Takiya of district Raibareilly. At 7th day, the Aqiqa ritual held and his name chosen as of the fourth Khalifa "Abul Hasan Ali".³⁷ Later on, he became popular as "Ali Miyan". In 1915 when Ali Miyan was of only two years old a big flood has drowned the region, consequently his house damaged. Therefore, his family shifted to his uncle's (Hafiz Sayyid Ubaidullah) home until the house reconstructed. In the mean time a relation brother of Ali Miyan, Maulana Muhammad Ahmad returned from England after finishing Masters in Philosophy. A big ceremony held in his reception.³⁸

In the family, everyone was conscious about, to avoid religiously prohibited things (Haram) particularly in food. Ali Miyan's father was always being cautious to manage Halal (permissible) food for his family. Whole family cooperate him, even the servants were cautious to keep away the children of the family from Haram (religiously prohibited).³⁹

In the family of Ali Miyan, many attempts were made for sake of business but most of them were fruitless, even those members who were returned from England after completing education were not much benefited by their degrees.

Once, few members collectively established a bricks plant. To quote Ali Miyan, “I purchased an air-gun and a watch by its earning. Nevertheless, shortly after, it closed due to lack of experience. These attempts were mostly resulted unproductive due to lack of proficiency and know-how of business”.⁴⁰

Mostly Ali Miyan’s childhood passed in Lucknow due to the reason that his father employed there. In the mean time Khilafat Movement was launched against British rule and the whole country influenced by it. In Lucknow also, many of its conventions held and most of the people join it.

Ali Miyan tells his remembrance of it, in these words, “in the city it deemed that the British rule is replaced by the headship of Ali brothers and Gandhiji. The arrival of Prince of Wales also remembered. On going outside I felt, hush in the city. Crowded markets and busy roads were vacant. European garments were burning in Aminuddaulah Park (Jhandewala Park). People, who wore European dress, were walking secretly. At that moment, I saw Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar and Gandhiji. My brother

Sayyid Habibur Rahman left his school and readmitted in a national school. People themselves were crushing their rewards and medals, which were honored by the British, or English was written on them, most of the people give up European dress and culture”.⁴¹

Beginning of his Education

At the age of four, the ceremony of Tasmiyah Khwani was held which was conducted by his uncle Maulana Sayyid Azizur Rahman.⁴² Since his father was employed in Lucknow thus his education begins there. At first he joined a Maktab, which was running in a room of nearby mosque, Nawazi, Imam Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was the teacher. There he learned basic lessons of Urdu and Arabic and according to the custom of the family; he completed *Qur'an* at the age of seven. Further, he learns Urdu with Maulana Azizur Rahman who was working in the office of Nadwa. After learning Urdu at a sufficient level the study of Persian started, Maulana Mahmood Ali appointed to teach. At the same time he read his father's works like "*Taleem-ul-Islam*" and "*Noor-ul-Iman*" as well as learned lexicography.⁴³

Since, very childhood Ali Miyan was fond of reading books and this interest increased by the time. More than interest, it turned as addiction. Reading was only means of playing and

entertainment for him. Even when he received pocket money, the only use of that money was to buy books. When father discards a book or any trash paper found, then he collected it, in his small library.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, at the age of nine Ali Miyan's father was died.

After his father's death

Merely, he was a kid when his father died in 1915. Therefore, he brought up under the patronage of his mother and stepbrother Dr Abdul Ali.

Dr Abdul Ali appoints his friend Shaykh Khalil Arab to teach him Arabic. Shaykh Arab was of Yemenite origin, so Arabic was his mother tongue therefore he has a good taste of Arabic language and literature, as well as he was an experienced teacher.⁴⁵ Under his studentship, Ali Miyan developed a full command in Arabic, shortly. Even he can express his ideas more clearly in Arabic instead of Urdu, therefore he writes most of his works in Arabic, originally. His most famous book, "*Maza-Khasir-al-Alam bil inhitatil Muslimen*" written first in Arabic. It was due to his teacher Shaykh Arab that he equipped sound knowledge of Arabic that he delivered many learned speeches in Arabic in Gulf countries and wrote several textbooks of Arabic Language. Few of his works were included in the syllabus of Arabic Literature in

Arab countries. He was an outstanding Arabic scholar of Indian sub-continent. Shaykh Khalil Arab provided its entire base. However, he also learns Arabic from his uncles, Maulana Sayyid Azizur Rahman and Maulana Sayyid Talha.⁴⁶

On 5th, 6th and 7th of November 1926, the yearly convention of Nadwa was held. Ali Miyan went there with his elder brother. Ali Miyan helps as a translator to the chief guest Shaykh Saduddin Burradah who was an Arab. As a result he became very popular for speaking boldly in Arabic at that very young age.⁴⁷ In that congregation he met Dr Zakir Hussain, Maulana Abu Abdullah Muhammad Surati, Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana Shah Sulaiman Phulwarvi, Qazi Sulaiman Mansoorpuri etc. On returning home, Dr Abdul Ali admitted him to Lucknow University in August 1927. There he got admission to B.A. in Arabic literature. Unluckily he failed at first attempt but next year he passed with distinction and awarded gold medal too, from the University.⁴⁸

When his aunt informed about his success, she invites him to Lahore. Therefore, in June 1929 he went to Lahore. With his uncle Maulana Muhammad Talha, he met various celebrities, there. Among them Allama Iqbal, Hafeez Jalandhari and Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, were notables.⁴⁹ In the meeting with Allama

Iqbal he shows his Arabic translation of Iqbal's poem "The Moon". His talent amazed Allama Iqbal in that young age. In this journey, he met with Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori but for a little while. So, next year again he took to Lahore to meet him for longer time.⁵⁰ There he attended the classes of Hujjatullahil Baligah. After that, Maulana advises him to meet his Murshid (mentor) "*Hazrat Khalifa Ghulam Muhammad Dinpurvi*". Therefore, he set for Dinpur with a reference letter of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. On reaching Dinpur, he met Hazrat Khalifa and gave him the reference letter. Hazrat Khalifa was 90 years old at that time. He made Ali Miyan as his disciple and recommends him the silent recitation.⁵¹ After staying there for 3, 4 days Ali Miyan returned back to Lucknow but unfortunately Hazrat Khalifa was died after a few days. He continues to correspond with Maulana Ahmad Ali and their relation become stronger by the time. Ali Miyan did not accept any other person as Murshid until Maulana Muhammad Ali Lahori died in 1950.⁵²

At Nadwa

Just after returning from Lahore in 1929 he admitted to Nadwa officially.⁵³ There he studies Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) from Maulana Shibly Jairajpuri as well as *Hadith* from Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan.

In September 1930 a well-known Arab scholar, Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali joins Nadwa as a teacher of Arabic Literature. Ali Miyan attended his classes of *Deewan-e-Nabigha* and *Shareh-Shuzur-al-Zahab*. Along with this, he also studied his unfinished *Tafsir*. When Shaykh Taqiuddin set for travel to Varanasi, Azamgarh, Mau and Mubarakpur, Ali Miyan accompanied him. In this journey, he met many eminent personalities of those places.⁵⁴

His career as a writer

At the age of 13, his elder brother assigns him to translate an Arabic text, which had published from Umuul-Qura. He successfully finished it, later it was published in the newspaper “*The Zamindar*”.⁵⁵

In the mean time, a continuous essay published on the life of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed in the Journal “*Tauheed*”. The essay “*Hindustan ka Mujahid-e-Azam ya Mujaddid-e-Azam*” was written by Maulana Muhiuddin Qusuri with a striking approach. Dr Abdul Ali asks Ali Miyan to translate it into Arabic. Ali Miyan did it, and show to his teacher, Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali for correction. After slight corrections, he suggests Ali Miyan to send it to Shaykh Rasheed Raza of Egypt to publish it in the journal “*Al-Manar*”. Therefore, he sent it to Shaykh Rasheed Raza. Shaykh

Rasheed Raza not only published it but also advised him if he permits, he will publish it in a separate volume. Ali Miyan agreed with it, soon it was published in a separate volume from Egypt.⁵⁶

It was his first work, which published from Egypt instead from India. It was the beginning of his career as an author, later he has written around 50 books on various Islamic disciplines.⁵⁷

However, his most famous work is “Maza-khasir-al-Alam bil inhitatil Muslimeen” which was written in Arabic. Later it was translated into Urdu, English, Persian, French and Turkish etc. As well as 26 additions were launched in different countries in different languages. Even many universities of Gulf countries include it in their syllabus of Theology and Islamic Studies.⁵⁸ When it translated into English for the first time. Shortly it became popular among Intellectual elite of the West.

Dr Buckingham (Chairman of Middle East Section of London University) compliments in these words, “this document is among those few great efforts which were attempted to revive Islamic faith in the 20th century”.⁵⁹

A famous orientalist Professor Sargent said, “if there was a provision of banning books in England, then I will recommend banning on import of this book. Because, the author vehemently criticized the western civilization”.⁶⁰

Famous Egyptian activist and writer Sayyid Qutub Shaheed attributed to it “Some excellent books which were passed to me in new and old literature on this topic. This book is a marvelous among them. It is a thriving sample of Historiography.”⁶¹

Stay at Deoband and Lahore

His elder brother Dr Abdul Ali was a Mureed (novice) of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani.⁶² Therefore Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani often comes to Lucknow and stays at Ali Miyan’s home. During a visit to Lucknow, Maulana Husain Ahmad recommended Ali Miyan, to come for a while in Deoband. To obey him, he visited Deoband; there he was a guest of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. Here he attends classes in Darul-uloom-Deoband and received special Islamic education individually from Maulana Husain Ahmad. He gave separate time to explain the meaning of difficult verses of the *Qur’an*.

After a stay of four months in Deoband, he returned on the onset Shaban. After a few days, he made third trip to Lahore. At this time, he properly admitted to Madrasah Qasim-al-Uloom and studied there for a whole session. In March 1933, the exams held in which Ali Miyan got success with distinctive score that was 98 percent. After convocation he returned to Lucknow.⁶³

In April 1934, Ali Miyan went to Lahore for the fourth time. This journey was begun on recommendation of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, that he stayed there and to pass some days in his service with full concentration, which could be helpful in spiritual development. For about 3 months, he resided in the Jama Masjid of Lahore, discretely busy in Salat, recitation, prayer, meditation and other religious activities with complete concentration.⁶⁴ At the end of June 1934, he returned to Lucknow.

His appointment as a teacher in Nadwa

Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali and Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan were senior teachers at Nadwa but they migrated to Iraq. Meanwhile, the strength of students was increasing gradually at Nadwa and some old teachers had recently died. So, a lack of teachers felt in the Institute. Therefore, on 15th of July 1934 a meeting of managerial council of Nadwa held, in which the issue of appointment of new teachers was raised. So, along with other members, Ali Miyan's name also presented for new appointment. Due to the agreement of all members, Ali Miyan selected as a teacher.

On 1st August 1934, Ali Miyan joined as a teacher of *Tafsir* and Arabic Literature at Nadwa.⁶⁵ In the same year, he married

to Sayyida Tayyibunnisa, the daughter of his maternal-uncle. Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan presided over the ceremony of Nikah and Dr Abdul Ali arranged the feast of Walima.⁶⁶

Ali Miyan's life account in brief

- Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was born on 6th Moharam ul Haram 1333 A. H. (1914 AD) in *Daira Shah Alamullah* in the village Takiya Kalan District Raibareilly of Uttar Pardesh.
- His mother, with the teaching of the *Qur'an*, started Ali Miyan's education and then, the formal education of Arabic and Urdu started.
- When he was nine years old, his father Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai died in 1923. The responsibility of his education then came to his mother and his elder brother Maulana Dr. Sayyid Abdul Ali Hasani.
- In 1924, he began his formal Arabic education under the guidance of Allama Khalil Arab, completed his Arabic studies under him.
- In 1926 Ali Miyan got admission to Nadwatul Ulama. He attended the Dars of *Hadith* by Allama Muhaddith Haider Hasan Khan and studied Bukhari, Sanan-Abudaud and Sanan-Tirmzee word by word from him.

- In 1926, Annual Convention of Nadwatul Ulama held at Kanpur. Maulana attended and impressed all by speaking Arabic fluently at the age of 13.
- In 1927, Ali Miyan took admission in Lucknow University. He obtained the degree of Graduation from the University.
- In 1927-30, Ali Miyan learnt English language.
- In 1931 Ali Miyan wrote his first article on Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed at the age of 17, which was published in the journal Al-Manar edited by Sayyid Rashid Raza of Egypt.
- In 1932, Ali Miyan studied the complete *Tafsir* of *Qur'an* at Lahore by Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the same year, he stayed few months at Darul Uloom Deoband where he took lessons from Shaykhul Islam Mualana Husain Ahmad Madani in Sunan Trimzi and Sahih Bukhari. He also took advantage of his stay and learnt *Tafsir*. He also took lesson in *Fiqh* from Shaykh Aizaz Ali and in Tajweed as per the reference of Hafs from Qari Ashgahr Ali. In the same year, Ali Miyan was included in the editorial board of the Arabic Journal "Al-Zia" of Nadwatul Ulama.
- In 1934, Ali Miyan joined Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher of *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, Arabic literature, History and Logic.

- In 1935, he traveled to Bombay to invite Dr. Ambedkar (the schedule caste leader) to adopt Islam.
- In 1938, Ali Miyan's first book the life history of Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was published which became popular amongst the religious circles.
- In 1939, his first journey to Lahore. He met Ulama and elites. He met Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He had already translated a poem of Dr. Iqbal in Arabic prose. In the same year he traveled to famous Islamic Centers in India, like Markaz Nizamuddin to meet Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlavi of Delhi and Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri in Raipur.
- In 1940, Ali Miyan was included in the editorial board of and the Urdu journal Al-Nadwa.
- Ali Miyan invited by Jamia Millia in 1942 to deliver a lecture, which later published with the title of "Deen-o-Mazhab".
- In 1943, Ali Miyan established an Association by the name of Anjuman Taleemat-e-Deen. Moreover, he delivered lectures on *Tafsir* and *Sunnah*, which became very popular particularly among the modern educated Muslims.

- In 1945, Ali Miyan selected as a member on the administrative council of Nadwatul Ulama.
- In 1947, Ali Miyan performed his first Haj. He stayed for a few months at Hijaz. It was his first foreign trip also.
- In 1948, Ali Miyan published an Urdu Journal Tameer-e-Hayat.
- In 1951, he appointed as the Deputy Director of Education at Nadwatul Ulama, by Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi. In the same year, Ali Miyan founded his famous movement Payam-e-Insaniyat (Message of humanity). In 1951, he also traveled to Egypt where his famous book 'Maza Khasir-al-Aalam-bil-inhitatil-Muslimeen' had already become popular. Here he introduced as the author of this book. In the same journey, he traveled to Palestine and visited Al-Aqsa mosque, Madinatul Khaleel and Baitullaham. In return, he met King of Jordan Shah Abdullah.
- In 1954, after the death of Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, he appointed as Nazim (Principal) of Nadwatul Ulama.
- In 1955, Ali Miyan appointed as the editor of the journal 'Al-Baas' (Arabic).
- In 1956, Ali Miyan appointed as visiting member of Arabic Academy Damascus.

- In 1959, Ali Miyan founded 'Academy of Islamic Research and Publications' in Nadwa. In the same year, he appointed as the editor of the journal 'Al-Raid' (Arabic) as well as took the responsibility of editorial of a Journal from Damascus.
- In 1961 after the death of his brother Dr. Abdul Ali, he was appointed as, General Secretary of Nadwatul Ulama.
- In 1962, he was appointed by Aligarh Muslim University to recast the BA course of Islamic Studies. In the same year, the first inaugural session and foundation of World Muslim League in Makkah held. In which His Royal Highness the King of Saudi Arabia Saud Bin Abdul Aziz and head of Libyan Idris Samosi was present. Ali Miyan performed the duties of secretary at that session Ali Miyan was also among the foundation member of the League of Islamic Universities.
- In 1963, he delivered many lectures in Jamia Islamia Madinah Munawara, which were published by the name of "Al Nabuwatu wal-anbiya-o-fee zauil-Qur'an". In the same year, he was appointed as the editor of Nida-e-Millet and Tameer-e-Hayat. In the same year, Ali Miyan traveled to Europe and visited Geneva, London, Paris, Cambridge, Oxford and important elites of Spain. He met many Arab and Western scholars and delivered many lectures.

- In 1963 inauguration and foundation of Madinah University Madinah, he was made the member of the advisory council and remained as member until the administration was changed.
- In 1965 Ali Miyan visited Turkey for the first time. He also visited Kuwait and other Gulf countries. He traveled to Afghanistan, Iran and Lebanon with the delegation of World Muslim League.
- In 1968, Ali Miyan was invited by the Education Minister of Saudi Arabia to participate in the critical study of the curriculum and system of the department of *Shariah*. He delivered many lectures in Riyadh University and the department of teaching.
- In 1976, Ali Miyan travelled to far West Algiers.
- In 1977, he visited America for the first time.
- In 1980, he was appointed as the Member of Arabic Academy of Jordan and the Chairman of Islamic Centre Oxford. In the same year, he received King Faisal Award.
- In 1981, Kashmir University awarded him Honorary Degree of Ph.D.
- In 1984, Rabita Adab-e-Islami appointed him as Chairman.

- In 1985, a trip to Belgium.
- In 1987, a trip to Malaysia.
- In 1990, Ali Miyan traveled to Burma and second trip to America.
- In the same year, Ali Miyan traveled to Samarkand and Tashkent.
- In 1999, he was awarded as 'The personality of the year' award by UAE for which a special plane was sent for him to take him to Dubai and bring him back.
- In the same year, Sultan Brunei Award presented to him by Oxford Islamic Center on his work of '*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*'.
- On 31st December 1999, he died in Takya, District Raibareilly and buried in his family graveyard.

His Thought

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was an eminent Islamic Scholar of the twentieth century. However, he belonged to the Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama of Lucknow yet he emerged as a towering personality, a great modern Islamic thinker, socio-religious reformer and a preacher of the true spirit and essence of Islam. An orator par excellence, an author with a distinctive

style, a man devoted to the cause of Islam and a guide to the masses. Ali Miyan was the embodiment of both traditional values and modern concepts. His concept of Islam was somewhat different from the traditional Scholars. Always moderate in outlook he favored neither the fanatic nor the radical ideologies. He appreciated the positive concepts of the Modern Era which are not contradictory to Islam. He believed in Islam as being a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor of human history.

Maulana always raised strong objection against the media image created by the Non-Muslims against Muslims and Islam. He was far from being conservative in his approach. Maulana understood the spirit of the age. He appreciated the role played by democracy and nationalism too. He did not consider Modern Civilization as being anti-Islamic. Therefore, he was always keen on seeking possibilities of combining both, modern civilization and Islam on uncontroversial common grounds, instead of forsaking or favoring either of the two. Here, two passages from his speech, delivered in a visit to USA, has been quoted. These could be helpful in analyzing his attitude towards the west.

To Ali Miyan, America is fortunate because nature has been most generous to it. The Lord has bestowed His gifts lavishly upon this country. Its people are resourceful and

enterprising. They are full of enthusiasm for living. They have been granted such a tenacity of purpose and resoluteness that they have made their country a paradise on earth. They have unraveled the mysteries of nature and harnessed its forces to their use. In the words of Iqbal, 'they have enchained the rays of the sun' and 'sought the orbits of the stars'. They have turned dust into gold. Now, in this land wealth pours down from the skies, and rivers of milk and honey flow. This is the result of the strong spirit, robust imagination and unflagging eagerness of the American people. The United States not only abounds in mineral resources, but has, also, the hands to exploit them. In this respect, it is exceedingly fortunate and the whole world is, as if it were, keenly desirous to prove it. Everyone is a beggar at its door, eager to solicit its favours. By their ingenuity, sense of discipline and capacity for management, the people here have organized their life so well that the world at large is benefiting from it. In the material and economic fields, they are supreme. You can justly be envious of America and admire it as much as you like. I do not believe in partisanship whether religious, social or political. One must give praise where praise is due.⁶⁷

After the presentation of this speech, he addressed the Americans the spiritual message of Islam to the west. According to Ali Miyan these tremendous achievements of the west,

particularly of America, is incomplete or even harmful, if the spiritual values are absent and humankind becomes materialistic. He said, "Along with all scientific development, this country is most unfortunate. I say it with a full sense of responsibility. Many of you may be shocked at it, but it is fact. It has been a tragedy not only for America but also to the entire humankind, that it concentrated entirely on material progress and made the physical world the sole sphere of its activity. It would have been a different story if the West received correct guidance and blessing of true faith. The Americans had, also, paid attention to morality with equal earnestness and enthusiasm and it is also necessary that they should pay attention, for the portents of God in *Anfus* (within themselves) and not only in *Afaq* (the horizons). If the intellectual faculties of the Americans not directed altogether, towards finding a clue to the mysteries of nature and themselves then their potential will waste. They would have to realize that the World of heart is more extensive than the world of matter, so much, so that if the whole of the Universe be dropped into the heart of a man it would get lost like a pebble in an ocean. The people of America would then, be able to appreciate correctly the place of man in the grand design of creation. Of the time and energy they have recklessly spent on material sciences, and, as we all know, with what results, we have it in the *Qur'an*

وَأَنْ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى وَأَنْ سَعْيُهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ

الْأَوْفَى ۝

That man can have nothing, but what he strives for. His striving will soon come in sight. Then he will be completely rewarded. (Qur'an 53: 39-41)

كُلًّا نُمِدُّ هَؤُلَاءَ وَهَؤُلَاءَ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ

مَحْظُورًا ۝

Each do we supply, both these and those, from the bounty of the Lord. And the bounty of the Lord can never be closed to anyone. (Qur'an 17: 20)

Whichever field man chooses for himself, God will grant him success in it. There is no limit to it, no thus far and no further. The consequences of the enterprise and industry of the West are before us. The world has shrunk and man has subjugated it for his own ends and interests".⁶⁸

He also, boldly invited the west towards Islam along with respecting their faiths. He presented the Islamic *Dawah* to the west in this very beautiful manner. To Ali Miyan, Islam is the final form of religion and it did not reject the previous faiths and prophets (pbut) and the revealed books. It emphasized and instructed the entire humankind to believe previous faiths alongwith the Islam and make faith on the true spirit of religion.

Islam, which awakened the latent human capabilities, gave encouragement to intellect, and made man self-reliant and self-respecting.

According to the *Qur'an*:

1. *“Surely we created man of the best stature. (Qur'an 95:04)*

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَن تَقْوِيمٍ ۝

2. *Verily we have honored the children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them over many of those whom we created with a marked preferment. (Qur'an 17: 70)*

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ۝

Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth. (Qur'an 2:30)

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۝

Islam places the crown of Vice-regency of Allah on man's head than which there can be no greater honor. The whole structure of Islam based upon the doctrine of Divine Unity and when it declares that man is Khaleefatullah (the Vice-regent of God) on earth, it elevates him so much that one cannot think of a higher and nobler concept of humanity.⁶⁹

Ali Miyan was a great patriot and his Indian citizenship was by his own choice. He realized that the destiny of Muslims of India intertwined with that of the Indian people as a whole. According to him, Indian Muslims should lead an Islamic life while at the same time participating in managing the affairs of the country and contribute to its progress and development. These were his efforts to reduce the distance between Muslims and Hindus, to demolish the wall of distrust between them and to create bonds of understanding and cooperation in rebuilding on the terms of common values of the society, which engulfed by dark forces of hatred and violence.

Ali Miyan adopted the methodology based on Islamic teachings and lessons from history. He projected the true character and message of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The message comprised justice, welfare, cooperation, forgiveness, and respect for faiths and rights of other communities. He believes that only a true Muslim could act as a real leader of entire humankind.

This logic made a salubrious effect, clearing from the minds of Non-Muslims, the cobwebs of serious misconceptions and negative notions about Islam. He initiated a movement by the name “Payam-e-Insaniyat” (message of humanity), for

spreading the message of goodwill, equality, unity, respect for humankind and gathering on common grounds.⁷⁰

Ali Miyan undertook extensive tours to acquaint himself of ground realities and coordinated with other organizations, inviting wise and learned persons of other communities on one platform for emphasizing the necessity of avoiding violence through better understanding of the whole nation. In case of any inevitable flare up and riot, he would go to the root cause, establish links with people who could prove effective for remedial measures and forestall future recurrences.

He had a similar attitude towards various seats of learning, educational institutions, and other organizations, be it a religious, political, traditional or modern. He appreciated the positive efforts of all and maintained a healthy rapport with them, offering advice and guidance, if required.

He would often recite a Persian couplet, which would translate, as “*comforts of both the worlds are the interpretation of pleasure for friends and cordiality with opponents*”.⁷¹ His avoidance of controversy or rebuttal construed by a tantamount to infirmity of opinion, an impression conveyed, might be by his extreme tolerance, as his oblivion to any opposition. On the contrary, he had full knowledge of what transpired behind his back and had a

definite well-considered opinion, ignoring trivialities, and addressing topics of real consequence. In case of negative and subversive thinking and activities, he was synchronizing criticism with tolerance. In more cases, the opposition could not win over his standpoint, the sole aim all the time being the cause of religion and its followers.

His writings, transcended boundaries of continents and languages, and are being treasures of knowledge and wisdom. These are lasting testimonies to above-mentioned qualities. He marked affinity for Arab nationalism. While appreciating the achievements of Turks, he did not desist from expressing himself against the anti-religious posture of their current regime. He adopted the principle of addressing a group or individual according to his receptivity and status, he interacted also with the elites of his own country and Muslim countries particularly the Arab countries. In all discussions, he maintained an attitude of selflessness and focused on the cause of humanity, exhorting all rulers and vassals to address themselves to the task of upholding the supremacy of the words of Allah and to the welfare of their people. Maulana accepted no favours for himself or for his kith and kin, and when an award did inevitably come by, he was forthwith donated it to the welfare of the people. Like Faisal award and the amount received from Dubai all went to

educational and welfare activities.⁷² Not that he was never in need but remained firm in his principle of not being overburdened by obligations from the powerful and the affluent. This enabled him to speak out uninhibitedly without compunction, from a position of authority.

He was a great literalist also. His literary came from Poet of the East Muhammad Iqbal (d.1938), whom he met in 1929, when he was merely a kid of 15. He had surprised Iqbal by presenting an Arabic translation of his poem, Chand (Moon), Iqbal advised him to concentrate for further improvement in the language. When Ali Miyan gone to see him again, he found Iqbal to be in total harmony with his thought, Iqbal has also attracted him because he was a rebel and powerful critic of the modern materialistic civilization, he was intensely concerned with recovering the lost glory of Islam, he was the greatest enemy of the ideology of narrow nationalism.

Critical remarks

The early life of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was surrounded by poverty. However, he belongs to an educated family but their financial condition was not too good. Ali Miyan's father died when he was nine years therefore his family depends on his stepbrother Dr. Abdul Ali for livelihood. However, due to Ali Miyan's extraordinary command in Arabic language and literature and good academic career he was introduced soon in the elite class of Arab world. At first, Ali Miyan travelled to "Haramain", Makkah and Madinah to perform pilgrimage (*Haj*). Later on he had an opportunity to visit these places at least annually as the member of the executive board of "Rabita" in Makkah, and a member of Madinah University.⁷³ On these occasions he was often invited by different Institutions to deliver lectures on the Islam and Muslims. He spoke to Arabs frankly and often pointed out any Un-Islamic tenets in their culture that came to his notice. Ali Miyan was also an enthusiastic preacher of Islam, and a sincere socio-religious reformer. His books reflected these characteristics, but he did not regard only writing as sufficient. He carried on propagating Islamic virtues and values throughout the world. He joined hands with Sayyid Abul Ala Moududi and then became associated with Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and joined his Tableegi Movement.⁷⁴ After the death of

Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, he associated himself with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri, a renowned spiritual personality. Thus, he achieved an interaction and balance between intellectual and spiritual qualities.

In order to preach the real and genuine faith of Islam among the Muslims of India, he founded the movement of “Payam-e-Insaniyat” (message of humanity). Through this new platform, he played a vital role in generating confidence and purposefulness among the Muslims of India. He travelled all over to spread his message in joint conventions and congregations of Muslims and other communities. In his lectures, which were usually extempore, he focused on ethical values. He especially drew attention of leading religious leaders, political personalities and the media of the country towards the maintaining of peace and harmony. He condemned the exploitation of their power for wicked political targets and endeavored to minimize tension and conflicts occurring due to misunderstanding.

He was a true reformer of Islam. There was no difference between his words and actions. He pointed out every weak zone of the faith and advised related people, of its appropriate solution. He appreciated interaction with non-Muslim brothers for clearing their minds about Islam and false blames of the enemies of Islam, unlike other Islamic scholars who were in

favour of isolating themselves with the non-Muslims and have conservative attitude. For the very purpose he met with top leaders of India and abroad and invite them to Islam, among them the notable was Dr. Ambedkar. He also visited abroad and conveyed the message through the lectures delivered at the congregations held in different universities of USA, like Harvard, Columbia and Detroit Universities etc.

He believes that present Muslims are guilty for hiding the true message of Islam from their non-Muslim brothers and they would be answerable in front of Allah. The only solution of the present chaos is, to truly follow the Islam as well as convey it to those who are devoid of it.

CHAPTER : 2

Notes and References:

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See also,
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2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. Ibid., p. 20. See also,
<http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601>
4. Ibid., p. 21. See also,
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5. <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601>
6. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, Raibareilly, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, 2001, p. 48.

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8. Ibid., p. 50.
9. http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi, Vol-1*, Lucknow, Maktaba-e-Islam, Queen Road, 1997, pp. 49-50.
10. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., p. 50. See also,
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11. Hasani Muhammad Saani, *Khanwada-e-Alamullahi*, op.cit., p. 204.
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13. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., p. 50-51.
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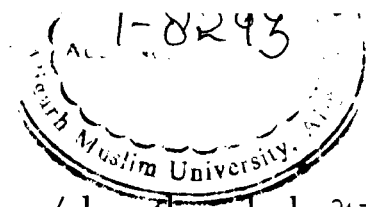
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18. Ibid., p. 26.
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<http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601>
22. Ibid., pp. 33-34.
23. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Zikr-e-Khair*, op.cit., pp. 38.
24. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi, Vol-3*, op.cit., pp. 70-71. See also,

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25. 20 rakat nafil(optional) Salat performed collectively after Isha in the month of Ramazan.
26. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali quotes, “*Once I hide and continued to hear her recitation of the Qur’an for a long time. I felt a drizzling of light from the sky. I can’t forget the delight of the moment*”.
27. Qasmi Mumshad Ali, *Hazrat Maulana Sayyid Abul hasan Ali nadwi Akaabir o Mashaahir-e-ummat ki nazar me*, Phulat Muzaffarnagar U.P., Shah Waliullah Academy, 1998, pp. 34-35. See also, Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., pp. 64-65. See also, http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
28. Ibid., p. 67. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, vol-1, op.cit., pp. 72-73.
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30. It is a period of 4 months and 10 days, which is mandatory for a widow to remain unmarried after his husband's death.
31. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, vol-1, op.cit., pp. 118-19.
32. Ibid., pp. 127-28,
http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
33. In 1958, Dr. Abdul Ali also designated as member of executive committee of Darul-uloom-Deoband. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-2, op.cit., pp.136-37.
34. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi
35. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's mother herself quotes:
"Whenever I saw somebody from my home coming I placed water filled utensil on stove to show him something is being cooked. However, there was no food in, but water only". Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Zikr-e-Khair*, op.cit., pp. 13-14. See also,
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36. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., p. 53.

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39. Ibid., p. 68.
40. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., pp. 82-83.
41. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-1, op.cit., p. 127.
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CHAPTER 3

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO *TAFSIR* WRITING

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ALI MIYAN'S EDUCATION IN QUR'AN AND QUR'AN EXEGESIS

Ali Miyan's basic education started with the learning of the Holy *Qur'an*. At the age of four, his Tasmiyah Khwani¹ held. Then he admitted to a maktab in a nearby Mosque Nawazi. According to the custom, he finished memorizing the *Qur'an* at the age of seven.² His adherence to the *Qur'an* strengthened as time passed. His mother played a vital role in developing his interest to the *Qur'an*. He studied *Tafsir* (commentary of the *Qur'an*) from Shaykh Khaleel Arab, Khwaja Abdul Hai Farooqui, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, Maulana Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madani, Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi and Manazir Ahsan Geelani etc.³

At first, Maulana Ali Miyan appointed as a teacher of *Tafsir* and Arabic Literature at Nadwa. Teaching *Tafsir* enhanced his command and hold on the subject largely. To quote Ali Miyan, "I brought old and big works from the library. I read Kashaf, Muallim Al-Nazed, Baghawi and Madarik completely. Among the latest works, I read *Tafsir* Al-Manar and Tarjuman al *Qur'an*. I got much guidance from Ruhul Moani from the point of view of

teaching and answering the queries of the students. For current affairs and comparative study I corresponded to Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, and I even travelled to Daryabad a number of times”.⁴

His Quranic approach

Ali Miyan has profound Qur’anic approach and elaborates many Quranic verses so that readers get new wonderful concept from it.⁵ To understand his *Qur’anic* approach, three writings of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi are very important which are as follows.

1. Moarka-e-Iman-o-Maddiyat (Faith verses Materialism)
2. Mansab-e-Nabuwat aur uske ali Muqaam-e-Hamileen
(Islamic concept of Prophethood)
3. Qur’an ke Usool o Mubadi

Here we discuss each book in brief to show his thoughts regarding the *Qur’anic* Text.

1. Moarka-e-Iman-o-Maddiyat (Faith verses Materialism)

This book firstly written in Arabic entitled “*Al-Sara bainal Iman wal Maddiya*”. Originally, it is a detailed interpretation of *Surah-*

al-Kahaf. The purpose of this book in the words of Maulana Ali Miyan is, “how this book came to be written, what is the nature of exegesis of *Surah-al-Kahaf* propounded here, from whom, I drawn inspiration in arriving at the conclusions drawn by me? How this verse is relevant to the challenging issues of the modern times and what guidance can be laid from the *Surah* to solve these problems. It demonstrates an unending struggle between the two Ideologies or concepts diametrically opposed to each other. One of these is *Materialism* denoting the primacy and objective to the external material world. The other one is the existence of realities, which lie *beyond the range of human perspectives*, as for instance the existence of Allah, moral and spiritual forces and their interaction and so forth. To Ali Miyan, at first, it seems that the people of faith will be defeated but they ultimately succeed in their objective. Therefore, the true believers in every age, like the companions of cave, given preference to their faith, righteous behavior and propinquity to Allah over worldly gains and material beliefs”.⁶ Unlike, the materialistic people, they have ever sought inward and spiritual satisfaction even if it meant renouncing earthly powers, honor and richness. This is the moral lesson inherent in this *Surah*.

Maulana Ali Miyan elaborates the theme of the story as “*Victory of Faith over Materialism*”. The story tells us of the struggle

between faith and materialism and demonstrates how faith overcomes materialism and it gives us a deep and sincere conviction in the ultimate cause of all causes. The youths of Ephesus ⁷ opted for faith rather than materialistic gain. They preferred poverty along with faith instead of wealth and power. They did not allow the gloom of materialistic gains to tarnish their faiths and sentiments, even though they had to bid farewell to their homeland, friends and family members. The lesson ends portraying the uncompromising faith of the companions of the cave who endured the persecutions with great courage and matchless fortitude until the very empire that persecuted them embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is not a rare event in world history. It happens several times that when a man or a group strongly obeyed the commandments of Allah and his Prophet (pbuh) and develop firm faith in them, the interests of greedy and materialistic people clashes with them and a conflict occur between faith and materialism. This is a test of the endurance of believers on their faith.

Ali Miyan says, “This is a story which is repeated again and again by the un-ending conflict between faith and materialism. The story of the companions of the cave demonstrates that the causes and effects are subservient to the will of Allah. The

correct way for the believer, is to base his faith on the Omnipotence of Allah and seek his blessings through unflinching conviction and righteous action”.⁸

The *Qur'an* addresses the entire humankind through the Prophet of Islam (pbuh):

وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا
تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ۝

“Restrain Yourself along with those who cry unto their lord in morning and evening. Seeking his countenance, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp of the life of the world. And do not obey him whose heart we have made careless to our remembrance who follow only his own lust and whose case has been abandoned”.

قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا
كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

“Say Lo! As form, my lord had guided me unto a straight path, a right religion, the community of Abraham, the upright, who was not an idolater (Qur'an 6:161).

Thus, we can conclude that moderate and temperate behavior is the lessons highlighted in Islam. In fact, Islam condemns unruly behavior of people's intolerant nature

materialistic approach in all cases, which form the base of the modern materialistic civilization of the West. To Ali Miyan, Materialism has never displayed equilibrium. Its social philosophies exhibit desperate extremism, its thought and wisdom are strangely erratic, its manners and morals smack of reckless extravagances and it always prefers to adopt the most difficult and crooked course.⁹

The second story included in *Surah-al-Kahaf* is the story of the owner of two gardens.

كَلَّمَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْهُمَا أَكْلُهُمَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلَالَهُمَا نَهْرًا

“Each of the two gardens yielded its produce and never failed therein in any way, for We had caused a stream to gush forth in the midst of each of them.” (Qur’an 18:33).

The owner of the groves thrived because of the invisible forces working for his success and prosperity. It was at this stage that the vision of the owner of two gardens coloured by the materialistic belief, which usually entertained by the ruling circles, feudal lords, leaders, industrialists etc. The owner ascribed the reason for his prosperity is due to his own capabilities.

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي ۗ

“He said I have been given it only on account of knowledge I possess” (Qur’an 28:70). Nevertheless, one of his friends who had firm faith on Allah tried to convince him that, this whole property and prosperity is by the blessings of Allah. Hence he should not be a greedy regarding the possessions Qur’an says,

قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ
ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ رَجُلًا ۝

“His comrade, when he (Thus) spoke with him, exclaimed Disbelieves their in his who created thee of dust, then of a drop (of reed), and then fashioned thee a man (Qur’an 18:37). Thus his attention was invited by his comrade toward the imperative need of restoring his faith in the omnipotence and beneficence of Allah”. (Qur’an 18:37)

وَلَوْ لَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ إِن تَرَنَّ أَنَا أَقْلَ
مِنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ۝

"Alas, if you said, on entering your garden, whatever God wills [shall come to pass, for] there is no power save with God!' Although, I have less wealth and offspring than you". (Qur’an 18:39).

Ali Miyan concluded the story, “the materialistic outlook of life, arising out of one’s absolute reliability on the efficiency of one’s own resources and contrivances. Plans for social and economic development, are regularly drawn up by materialistic governments, who proclaim from rooftops the production

targets that they must achieve within a given time. But man is not the dictator of all events, he is merely an instrument of dictation. The actual role is of Allah”.¹⁰ Therefore, His desire settles the destiny of man as well as the entire Universe. He has full autonomy on everything or every particle existed in the Universe.

The third story ascribed to Prophet Moses (pbuh). In this story, his journey with Khidr described. In which Khidr acted in an unexpected manner and annoyed Prophet Moses (pbuh), initially. Nevertheless, in the end Khidr defined the secrets behind those events. The story has relevance even in this age. It proposes that life is not an iota more than what it explains. Only that is to be believed which is tangible and capable of being comprehended and the rest is non-existent. In addition, man is the rightful owner and master of this world. *Surah-al-Kahaf* in general and the episode of Moses (pbuh) in particular, strikes at the root of materialistic thought. The story concludes with these words of Khidr.

ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا

“Such is the interpretation of that wherewith you could not bear”

(Qur’an 18:82)

The last story, described in *Surah-al-Kahaf* is the story of King Zul-Qarnain. However, modern historians cannot identify him clearly, but according to the *Qur'an*, Zul-Qarnian was a mighty emperor, in spite, of this, his conquests never filled him with conceit and self-admiration. He never said, “I have been given it only on account of knowledge I possess” but only by the blessing of Allah. Just like a true believer in Allah and hereafter, he laid more stress on the help and grace of Allah.

قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي فَإِذَا جَاء وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي

حَقًّا

“He said this is a mercy from my lord, but when the promise of Lord comes to pass, he will lay it low, for the promise of my lord is true”.
(*Qur'an* 18:98).

He never forgets his Lord, not when he was crowned or when he won the most brilliant victories and began to control gigantic resources and sinews of earthly power. This was the noble and virtuous path trodden by Prophet Solomon (pbuh), King Zul-Qarnain, Khulafa-i-Rashidun and other religious leaders of Islam during their own times in different ages and parts of the worlds.

2. **Mansab-e-Nabuwwat aur uske aali muqam hamileen (Islamic concept of Prophethood)**

Another one of Ali Miyan's works related to *Qur'anic* interpretation is "Mansab-e-Nabuwwat aur uske aali muqam Hamileen". It is a collection of the lectures of Ali Miyan.¹¹ In these lectures, Ali Miyan tried to highlight the importance and relevance of Prophetic guidance to the entire humankind particularly in the modern age. In these lectures, Ali Miyan gave references only from the *Qur'an*. In his first lecture, he stated the "*Prophetic guidance*" is the only solution to the challenges facing the present world scenario. Moreover, it is the only means to attain successful, satisfactory, and prosperous life. All other thoughts and philosophies even the Greek Philosophy has been proved a failure. The only way to success in this life and the hereafter is what revealed on Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

In the words of Ali Miyan, "The positions of Prophets (pbut) are like the peak of a high mountain. They can see both lives and their results, simultaneously. Therefore, their guidance is reliable to all those human beings who cannot see the life and requisites of the hereafter".¹² Holy Prophets (pbut) warn people from the robbery of ethics from humankind and pointed out the dangers and harms, which cannot be seen from worldly eyes.

They also work, with the emotions of pity, sympathy and love and regardless of any reward from people and they pleaded people to adopt the revealed guidance of Allah.

In the second lecture, he described the rank, and status of the Prophets (pbut), their noble characters that were landmarks for the entire humankind. They served humankind without any hope of reward and desire for materialistic gain. They did as directed by Allah because they believed that they would be rewarded on the Day of Judgment. He also explained that the foremost important teaching of all Prophets (pbut) was “*to believe in the omnipotence of Allah*”. In addition, he shed a light on what were their contributions in the evolution and progress of human civilization.

In his third address, he tried to explain what losses and harms faced by humankind, upon following the leaders other than Prophets (pbut). He underlined that, there is difference between the Intention and interests of Holy Prophets (pbut) and other leaders. Prophets (pbut) do not work for their selfish interests but on the revealed guidance of Allah. They deserved to be followed. They are reliable leaders, who can appropriately guide humankind, to success both, in this life and the hereafter, whereas the worldly leaders work mostly for their selfish interests, and their activities and words come from their limited

confined intellect.¹³ Therefore, there are always chances of mistakes and accidents in their judgments. Rulers, politicians, lawyers and leaders always experiment with the sentiments of the common people but they fail at last. They play with the lives and future of humankind. There example is akin to a child with a piece of paper in his hand, who in accord to his wish can, open it, tear it into pieces or burn it.

In the fourth lecture, he describes that the answer to a number of challenges faced today lie in the teachings of the Prophets (pbut). There are always only two options against humankind either follow Prophetic guidance or bear eternal loss. It is a natural phenomenon, which has always existed in all the ages of human history. The *Qur'an* has exemplified this through the description of many events of the past, such as the story of Firoun of Egypt and the people of Aad and Samood, etc.

In his fifth lecture, he described social, economic and religious conditions of the world prevailing at the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Ali Miyan writes, “the intensity of unrest in the society touching its zeal, is the appropriate time for a Prophet to come”.¹⁴ All the nations and societies of the world were living in deep darkness of ignorance at that time therefore, it was the appropriate moment for the arrival of the Prophet (pbuh). Makkah, which was previously the greatest centre of the

believers of Allah, had turned into a temple of 360 idols. Many inhuman and animistic customs and practices prevailed in the society, like the burying of daughters alive, marrying with sisters and daughters and stepmothers, worshiping idols, nude *Tawaf* of *Kabah*, harsh behavior with slaves, illiteracy etc.

In the sixth address, he pointed out the revolutionary impact of the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) mission on the society. The gradual changing in the lifestyle and the interests of Arabs. Those who were far away from civilized characters and moral values, turned good. The stories of their high moral character and sacrifices, for each other's welfare, presented as principle chapter in human history. They became good friends, good neighbors, sympathetic warriors and ideal leaders. He talked of the Islamic society of the first century Hijrah, which was the fruit of Muhammad's mission. He briefly explained some stories of Muhammad's (pbuh) companions as representations of their excellent moral characters.

In the seventh lecture, he explained some special features of Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh). He particularly tried to explain that he was the last Prophet of Islam (pbuh). To prove his statement he gave evidences from the *Qur'anic* verses and authentic narratives (*Ahadith*). Other previous revealed books

also foretold about the last Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Simultaneously, he condemned those false prophets who claimed after Muhammad (pbuh) and the hatred of great Islamic Scholars against these false prophets and collected evidences against them.

In the eighth address, he talked about some conspiracies against Islam. Prophetship is sealed with Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)” and it is a blessing of Allah on the entire Humankind.

3. Qur’an Ke Usool-o-Mubadi

This is his third book on the *Qur’an*. In this book, Ali Miyan described some amazing facts and miraculous aspects of the Holy *Qur’an*. Ali Miyan stated that the *Qur’an* itself claims that it is a *Mujiza* (Prophetic Miracle). It is a Book in which analyses has been done about the miracles and lingual beauty of *Qur’an*. Ali Miyan quoted many verses from the *Qur’an* and elaborated their meanings and miraculous aspects. According to him, Islam is the greatest miracle of *Qur’an*, another miracle is its depth as a source of knowledge and the third, stories of previous Prophets (pbut).

He has also described many other miraculous aspects of the *Qur’an* in detail. In the end, he stated that there are three bad

features of a man, which create hurdles in availing advantages from the *Qur'an*. They are Self Admiration (Proud), Debate (arguing in favour of the wrong deeds) and Infidelity (Kufr). While, some good habits are necessary to avail and without these good habits, one cannot approach the miraculous aspects, and deep knowledge of *Qur'an*. These habits are curiosity for religion, listening with respect, following the commandments of it, fear of Allah, faith in hereafter, hard work, and respect and admiring dignity of the *Qur'an*.¹⁵

Critical remarks

Ali Miyan's *Qur'anic* approach is profound and in-depth. He applied deep thinking and intellect to study the inherent philosophical quotations of the *Qur'an*. Most of his writings contain several references from the *Qur'an*. He used *Qur'anic* verses extensively to prove his thoughts and opinions. However, most of his interpretation of *Qur'an* is *Tafsir-bil-Rai*, because very little number of *Ahadith* were quoted in his *Tafsir*. He always tried to interpret *Qur'an* in modern context and current world scenario, because he believes that *Qur'an* is the last word of Allah and is a light for every era till dooms day. Therefore, *Qur'an* is fully competent to modern age also. In his work *Faith vs Materialism* he tried to put forth the theme of Surah and thinks

that this Surah give the lesson in the especially current evils of the world among them is Materialism. No one can say that Qur'anic teachings were outdated and not have solutions of the present day issues.

He put forth amazing illustrations of *Qur'anic* verses in his own specific way. Although he did not write a full commentary of the *Qur'an* but he explained some specific verses of the *Qur'an* and highlighted their lingual beauty. These new philosophical illustrations present a wonderful aspect of the *Qur'an* to readers and increase its significance to manifold. It was his life mission to introduce the world with the message and teachings of *Qur'an*, because he believes that *Qur'an* is a letter of Allah to every human being though he is a Muslim or not. It is the duty of every Muslim to introduce the *Qur'an* to every human being and convey the message of Islam.

CHAPTER : 3

Notes and References:

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5. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Qur'ani Ifadaat*, Raibareilly, Muhammad al-Hasani Trust, 2000, p. 19.
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14. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
15. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Qur'an ke Usool-o-Mubadi*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1986, pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER 4

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO HADITH LITERATURE

CHAPTER 4

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Maulana Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi worked with many facets of Islamic knowledge, like *Tafsir*, *Hadith*, Arabic Literature, *Tasawwuf* and Islamic History and culture. In *Hadith* especially, his knowledge was explicit and carried depth. His ancestors had also made valuable contributions to *Hadith* literature. Many famous works in *Hadith* are attributed to them like, *Qamar-ul-Islam*, *Samsam-ul-Islam*, *Alam-al-Huda*, *Meher-e-Jahantaab*, *Sirat-us-Saadat*, *Sirat-Ilmiyah*, *Nuzhat-ul Khawatir*, *Al-Thaqafatul Islamiyah fil Hind*, *Al-Hind Fi Ahadal Islami*, *Gul-e-Rana*, *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* etc.¹

In this chapter, we have discussed Ali Miyan's early education in *Hadith*, his thought and contribution to *Hadith* literature.

His Early Education in Hadith

Ali Miyan's father, Maulana Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai Hasani was an eminent scholar of *Hadith*. His book "*Gul-e-Rana*" has an outstanding fame in the field. So, Ali Miyan was brought up in an environment in which there were constant discussions about the narratives of *Hadith*. When he was a child he heard the

women in his family sing the poems of “*Samsamul-Islam*” Which is actually an Urdu translation of Waqdi’s ‘Futuh-ul-Sham’, it was rendered from Urdu to Arabic by Sayyid Abdul Razzaq Kalami (d.1914) a family member of Ali Miyan. Ali Miyan always got excited, listening to these poems. In his own words, “my aunty sang the poems in a simplistic manner and bold tune so that we were stirred by the feelings for the heroic stories of Hazrat Khalid bin Waleed and Hazrat Zirar bin al Azwer, and his sister Hazrat Khola bint al-Azwar and other companions were told in these poems. The expedition of the battle of Syria, particularly the martyrdom of the companions was heartbreaking to listen. The tears of listeners would flood out and we children would not remain unaffected”.² At the age of 15, Ali Miyan received a book of Sirat (Muhammad’s biography) “*Rahmatullil Aalamin*” which was compiled by Sayyid Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman Mansoorpuri. This book left remarkable effects on Maulana Ali Miyan’s personality. Ali Miyan himself says, “When I received the book. I went through it several times. At many places, I have lost control over my heart. Some of its concepts thoroughly affected my thought. The stories of the earliest preachers of Islam, particularly, the stories of Hazrat Musab bin Umair, the comparative study of his pre Islamic and later life and sacrifices he made to preach Islam. The migration of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to Madinah and his gracious welcome by the Ansar and

their great excitement the establishment of brotherhood (Moakhat) between Muhajrs and Ansar and their mutual affection and cooperation and the sad departure of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) to his heavenly abode, all these events affected my heart very deeply. I read the book again and again and referred it to other".³

From the above-mentioned narrations, we can conclude that, Ali Miyan's very first encounter with *Hadith* was heartwarming and caught his attention from an early age onwards. His formal education in *Hadith* started at Nadwa. His first teacher of *Hadith* was Haider Hasan Khan.⁴ Ali Miyan states, "It was my luck that I learnt only a single subject at a time. When I was learning *Hadith*, I studied no other subject along with it. I stayed with Maulana Haider Hasan Khan in his room, and was given charge of his library. I consulted several books of *Hadith* literature by which I gained command on the subject. I learnt Bukhari and Muslim word by word, from him".⁵

Ali Miyan highly appreciated; Maulana Haider Hasan Khan's method of teaching, To Ali Miyan, his method of teaching was purely research based and interrogative. He followed the method of Syrian Muhaddithun (Traditionists) in teaching. He had a deep knowledge of the works of Yemenite Traditionists, as well, like those of Al-Ameer Muhammad bin Ismail al Sunani,

Muhammad bin Ibraheem Al-Wazeer, Allama Maqbal and Allama Al-Shokani. He mostly went through Syrian Muhaddithun, and even gave references by them particularly of Allama Shokani, he also referred to the Hanafite scholars who were famous for the study of authentic traditions like, Imam Tahawi, Allama Zalii and Ibn-al-Turkmani and Ibn-Hammam etc. He was not confined only to Shareh (summary) but also consults new sources of the time for example, if he came across a controversial issue in Bukahri, he did not confine his research only to Hanfi's Fathul Bari and Aini but also consulted to Shafi's Kitabul Umm and Imam Malik's "*Mudawwina*" to present their diversified opinions. He also had a deep insight on the books of "*Asma-al-Rijal*" like Mizan al Itidal, Tahzeeb al Tahzeeb, Taz kirahat-ul- Huffaz and Lisan-al-Mizan etc.⁶ Mostly he instructed his students to consult library books. He sometimes advised his students to carry out an academic work and compile *Shareh*⁷, which gave an impetus of writing to the students. Sometimes when a difficult word came across in a lesson, in which different scholars had different opinions many dictionaries were consulted, different opinions of *Hadith* scholars were found out from their books, sometimes even Arabic poetry and literature was examined for the purpose, and hence, after a lot of interrogation, the whole class would consent to a single solution. To Ali Miyan it is the best method of teaching *Hadith* literature.⁸

Learning Hadith from Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani

In August 1932, Maulana Ali Miyan Nadwi made a journey to Deoband⁹ to learn *Hadith* from Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. Ali Miyan reached Deoband in August 1932. It was the month of Rabi-al-Awwal, in which educational activities were at their peak. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani was conducting the classes of Bukahri and Tirmizi. Ali Miyan attended them regularly.¹⁰ Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani was a famous scholar of *Hadith* among all his contemporaries. But his method of teaching was different from Nadwa. Therefore, in his classes Ali Miyan got a new experience and knowledge. Ali Miyan explains his method of teaching in these words, “sometime his lecture continued for 3-4 days on an issue, and one class period was of 60 minutes. The lecture contained discussions on sources, Sanad (chain of narrators), Matan (text of *Hadith*), and Diversity of the opinions of the four schools of jurisprudence and their arguments and proofs. Besides this, the Ali Miyan’s impressive style and calm environment of Darul *Hadith* made learning worthwhile. I still hear the echo of his voice. In the meantime, students asked questions of which some were also irrelevant questions. But Maulana replied to all of them in a very cool manner”.¹¹ After returning from Deoband he continued his study at Nadwa and completed the syllabus in 1935.

Hadith literature was Ali Miyan's favorite subject both during his education and afterwards. Initially, he appointed as a teacher of *Hadith* and Arabic literature at Nadwa and for a long time taught Bukhari to every batch. When he became a senior, he taught Tirmizi, Siha-i-sittah and Muwatta Imam Malik to the students of Alimiyat and Musnad-e-Imam Ahmad to the students of Fizalat.¹² He authorized many scholars of Arab and India as Muhaddith. Maulana Ali Miyan himself was authorized by the two eminent scholars of *Hadith*, Maulana Haider Hasan khan and Maulana Abdur-Rahman Mubarakpuri, both scholars have genealogical connection to the traditionists of Yamen and Hijaz respectively.¹³ As he became more senior, his affection towards Bukhari grew to a great extent. Every day he heard some texts of Bukhari from a student and read "*Tahzeeb ul Akhalaq*" which was written by his father.¹⁴ Ali Miyan authored three treatises in which he discussed the role and contribution of *Hadith* from different parameters. These are:

- Al-Madkhal ila dirasat al-Hadith al-Nabwi al-Shareef.
- Daur-al Hadith fi Taqween al-Majtama al-Islami.
- Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari wa kitabihi-al-jami-al-Sahih.

The summary accounts of these books will be discussed later.

Ali Miyan's thought regarding Compilation of Hadith

Hadith is the only source, which gives the complete information of Prophet's life and Habits (*Sunnah*). In every age, it provides the spiritual, moral, and righteous as well as scholastical glow to the whole *Ummah*, just what the *Sahabah* got directly from the Prophet (pbuh). Not only the glow, but also the temperament of Prophet (pbuh) and his companions, transmitted to the later generations. In the long span of Islamic history, even not a little passage of time we can find, which is blank from the people who are true descendents of *Sahabah* in respect of their Faith and Disposition.¹⁵

Authenticity of Hadith

Regarding *Zaeef* (weak) and *Modhu* (false or forged) Traditions, Ali Miyan's attitude was clear. To him, *Modhu* and *Zaeef* traditions played the most important role behind the occurrence of turmoil's, conflicts, doubts and controversies in Islamic history. There is no Noor (light), clarity and reality or promise and support of Allah to *Modhu* and *Zaeef Ahadith*, as compared to the *Qur'an* and *Sahih Ahadith* (Authentic *Ahadith*). In addition to this, there are many illogical concepts in these traditions, as a result, different types of doubts and controversies have emerged within the Faith. Muslims should consult only

authentic traditions even in *Fazail-e-Amal* (Virtues of fair deeds). Moreover, the books other than *Siha-e-Sitta*¹⁶ could not be equivalent to them, because *Siha-e-Sitta* is undisputedly recognized by the majority of *Ummah*. Therefore, Muslims should only rely on *Siha-e-Sitta*, particularly, in the present age, in which the tendency of the people toward the religion is very low. It is very necessary to be cautious regarding authenticity of *Ahadith*.¹⁷

The authenticity of *Hadith* literature not only fulfills the criterion of genuineness, itemization of events and preciseness but also baffles human intellect. No effort of a similar nature has ever made by man to preserve the record of events pertaining to the greatest of men including other Holy Prophets (pbut), nor do the records of history furnish any parallel to it. Not only biographical records pertaining to the life of the Prophet (pbuh), but also cursory books, written on *Ahadith* and personal character of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). For example, the *Ahadith* related to the last pilgrimage of the Prophet (pbuh). It can be seen that they mentioned such particulars, as cannot be known of even the most detailed accounts of many a contemporary personality. These *Ahadith* enter into such details, as how the Prophet (pbuh) applied perfume after putting on Ihram, who helped him with it and what type of perfume it was. In addition, how he scratched

the sacrificial animal as a symbol of it is to be sacrificed, where and how he did it, whether the animal was scratched on the left or on the right side, how the blood was wiped. Whether the Prophet (pbuh) had taken recourse to phlebotomy, in which limb the bloodletting allowed, where and how phlebotomy performed. At how many places he was accompanied during the journey between Madinah and Makkah, where he camped and in how many days the journey was completed, these and similar other minute details can be sourced from these *Ahadith*, although these were compiled during a time when people were not used to keep any diary or engagement books. Even, paper was not introduced to the Arabs at this time. One can even find in it, one of the *Ahadith*, a discussion of an incident, when a snake suddenly appeared amidst a gathering and slipped unhurt without being killed by anybody. These narratives also tell the names of those fortunate persons, with whom the Prophet (pbuh) shared his dromedary, the barber who trimmed the Prophet's (pbuh) hair, how he distributed his trimmed hair, who got the hair of the left side and who of the right, and in a like manner, whatever he said, commanded or exhorted can read exactly in his own words in these *Ahadith*. All this done dutifully in compliance with his command "Whoever of you is present should convey it to those who are absent, perhaps those who may learn it indirectly may remember it better than those present".¹⁸

He comprehend that, the sayings and practices of the Prophet (pbuh) constitute a standard, an exact scale by which the later reformers and revivalists of Faith can measure the doctrines and disciplines and the norms and usages of public life of their own times and can find out errors and deviations made by the Muslim community during its long journey through time and space. It is also essential for the right and proper functioning of public morality and virtuous behavior of the individuals that both the *Qur'an* and the *Ahadith* should be kept in view to draw out the rules of conduct. The Prophet's (pbuh) portrayal of his public and private conduct, exerting a steadying and moderating influence, the followers of Islam would have, like the adherents of other faiths, gone to the extremes in their beliefs and attitudes and strayed from the right path. The *Qur'an* tells the Muslims, "*Assuredly in the Apostle of Allah you have an excellent pattern*".(*Qur'an*24:67), and urges them to take his life as a model at every step with the soul stirring words "*Say, If you love Allah, follow me Allah will love you and forgive your sins*".(*Qur'an*35:83) He confirms that the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) is, truly, the great exemple to humankind for gaining strength and confidence in walking the path of virtue and goodness.¹⁹

He figures out that, there are sections of people who want to rob the Muslims of this great reservoir of guidance and try to

create doubts regarding the authenticity of the *Ahadith*. Perhaps they do not know what harm they are inflicting upon the *Ummah* and how they are depriving it of such a precious and great treasure. Unwittingly they are trying to disinherit the Muslims from their patrimony, which will eventually result in taking them away from their pristine creed and tenets in the same manner as were Christians and Jews led away from their faiths by their enemies. If anyone willfully carrying out this nefarious task, then he is the greatest enemy of Islam and Muslims. Because, there is no other means to revive the feel and touch of the climate that existed during the times of the Prophet. This climate flowed directly from association with the Prophet (pbuh) and now it can again, be revived by *Hadith*, which is a living portrait of the Prophet's (pbuh) life.²⁰

Ali Miyan quoted, Muhammad Asad to strengthen his views for the rejection of *Ahadith*. Muhammad Asad, (Formerly Leopoldwiess, a European Jew reverted to Islam, who is fully aware of the mental attitudes of the modern generation and conversant with the imperialistic objectives and cultural domination of the West), has thrown light on the motive behind rejection of *Hadith*, which is raising its head again nowadays. He has reached the conclusion that the norms and values of modern degenerate civilization, its way of life and prevailing taste can

never be in line with the true spirit of Islam as reflected in the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), nor a life based on deep attachment to the Prophet (pbuh) and his teachings or confidence on the reliability of *Hadith* and its sources can ever be compatible of the concept of Western civilization and its infallible categories of rationalism. This is perhaps the reason for rejection of *Hadith* by various politicians and administrative heads of Muslim countries that have already yielded to modernism. Muhammad Asad writes, “These days, when the influence of Western civilization makes itself more and more felt in Muslim countries, one more motive is added to the strange attitude of the so called “Muslim intelligentsia” in this matter. It is impossible to live according to the *Sunnah* of our Prophet (pbuh) and to follow the Western mode of life at the same time. However, the present generation of Muslims is ready to adopt everything that is Western, to worship the foreign civilization because it is foreign, powerful and materially brilliant. The “Westernization” is the strongest reason why the traditions of our Prophet (pbuh) and, along with them, the whole structure of the *Sunnah* have become so unpopular today. The *Sunnah* is so obviously opposed to the fundamental ideas underlying Western civilization that those who are fascinated by the later, see no way out of the tangle but to describe the *Sunnah* as irrelevant, or not a compulsory, aspect of Islam because, it is based on unreliable traditions. Then on, it

becomes easier to twist the teachings of the *Qur'an* in such a way that they appear to suit the spirit of Western Civilization”.²¹

Denouncing the people who are propagating doubts regarding the authenticity of *Ahadith*, he held, people who are hand in glove with the rejecters of *Hadith* are trying to shake off its authority, worth and value. These people actually insensible to the great disservice they are doing to the Muslims. To quote, Muhammad Asad “The *Sunnah* is the iron framework of the House of Islam and if you remove the framework from a building can you be surprised if it breaks down like a house of cards.”²² Likewise, the exceptional position of Islam as a moral and practical, as an individual and social code, would be shattered to pieces”.²³

Ali Miyan condemns, the people trying to create distrust in the authority and authenticity of *Hadith* as well as those inviting the people to reject it altogether have had different motives, personal, religious or political. Some of them foolishly abetted such activities simply to get away from certain obligations of the *Shariah* or moral and religious restraints. Yet, notwithstanding these efforts, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh) has always remained imperative and substantial and has acted as a shining example inviting the people to take the path shown by it. Since the Islamic society is made up of a texture consisting of *Hadith*,

which permeates through every pore of the body politic of Islam, it therefore is impossible to separate it from any Muslim community. In addition, this makes impossible to form a new Muslim society, complete in all respects, based solely on the *Qur'an* only. The purpose of Prophet's (pbuh) apostleship has been made clear in the *Qur'an* itself by Allah, "*And we have revealed unto thee the remembrance that thou mayest explain to mankind that which hath been revealed for them*".(*Qur'an*23:78)²⁴

Ali Miyan's works on Hadith Literature

1. Daur-al-Hadith fi Taqween al-Majtama Al-Islami (Role of Hadith in the promotion of Islamic climate and attitude)

Actually, the book is a text of a Presidential lecture in a convention of Rabita-Alam-e-Islami (World Muslim League) in 1981, by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. As obvious from the title, the lecture delivered for highlighting the importance of *Hadith* in daily life of a Muslim. Its role in the development of great Muslim personalities and revivalist movements, as well as its contribution in generating the Islamic mood and religious temper in common Muslims. At last, he unveiled the conspiracies of raising doubts in the minds of common Muslims regarding the authenticity of *Hadith*. Ali Miyan severely

condemned these conspiracies and termed it as an act of the enemies of Islam. Ali Miyan said, “I have tried to keep before the mental attitude and psychology of the modern educated class whose outlook and understanding have been molded by the writings of orientalists. It often asks, what is the practical utility of *Ahadith*? Why *Ahadith* deemed essential for everyday life of the Muslims? What would be the harm and what vacuum would create in the life of the individual Muslim and the community, at large if *Ahadith* were given up altogether. Often these questions are expressly articulated and at times, they remain troubling their minds. I have attempted to answer these questions and I hope that deductive minds which proceed not by theories and insincere arguments but by the logical relationship between the cause and effect would feel satisfactory with it. By *Hadith* we not only acknowledge the information of Prophetic era but it is also a comprised the acts of companions which were not opposed by the Prophet (pbuh)”.²⁵ Therefore *Hadith* is a crucial factor in generating the same temper and mood as of Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions in the later generations. In the words of Ali Miyan, “It was because of the *Ahadith* and *Sunnah* that the Muslims have continued to possess on Islamic outlook and religious inclination. They have continuously been inheriting the same spiritual and intellectual patrimony of Faith, which had directly passed to the Companions by the Prophet of Islam

(pbuh). This uninterrupted continuity has maintained not only, in the creed and form of worship and legal injunctions but has also had a constant flow in the shape of mental attitudes, moods and tempers. Its perpetuation was, of a fact, made possible from one generation to other owing the presence of *Hadith*, for there has been any interlude, not even of the shortest duration, when this continuity was totally broken. So long as the *Hadith* literature exists will continue to be read and studied and thereby the air and feeling of the time of the Prophet's (pbuh) companions will stay on. This will preserve the true spirit of religion, which gives precedence to the hereafter over the worldly existence, to the *Sunnah* over the unrecognized rites and customs, and to the spiritual perfection over material benefits. This will save the followers of Islam from surrendering completely to worldliness and materialism, from denying of life after death and yielding to innovations and deviations in religious matters. The *Hadith* would always be giving rise to reformatory movements and there will ever remain one or the other group upholding the true Faith, putting its life on stake for maintaining the authority of *Sunnah* and *Shariah*. In modern days, some intellectuals are propagating the doubts regarding the authenticity of *Ahadith*. They want to decrease the importance of *Hadith*. Ali Miyan condemns this in these words, "Some people want to rob the Muslims of this great treasure of guidance and

pursuance and try to create doubts regarding the authenticity of *Ahadith*. Perhaps, such persons do not know what harm they are inflicting upon *Ummah* and how they are depriving it of such a precious and great treasure. They are not aware how they are unwillingly trying to disinherit the Muslims from their patrimony which will eventually led to them away from pristine creed and tenets in the manner of Christians and Jews, were led away from their Faith by their enemies, of else lost them through the vicissitudes of fortune. If these persons are willfully acting this nefarious task, then they are the greatest enemy of Islam and Muslims”.²⁶

2. Al Madkhal ila dirasat al-Hadith al-Nabwi al-Shareef (An introduction of Hadith Science)

As obvious from the title, this book written in Arabic. In this book, Ali Miyan focused on almost all aspects of *Hadith* literature. It comprises of bold discussions on the subject and technical terms associated with it, as well as special features of *Siha-e-Sittah*. However, the unique feature of this work is that he addressed the topic of *Hadith* Science in a unique manner, as done in *Hadith* scrutiny, *Asma-al-Rijal* and *Tadween* etc. It holds beneficial knowledge for the scholars of *Hadith*.

3. Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari wa kitabihi-al-jami-al-Sahih (Imam Bukhari and his Book)

This book was actually an essay on *Hadith*, which was presented by Ali Miyan in a Seminar on Imam Bukhari, held in Samarkand (Homeland of Imam Bukhari) in 1993, later it was compiled as a treatise. In this book, Ali Miyan presented not only sufficient information on Imam Bukhari and his book, but also pointed out some amazing facts and knowledge about Bukhari and its *Ahadith*.

Besides these books, Ali Miyan has discussed *Hadith* literature in his other books as well. In the first volume of *Saviors of Islamic Spirit*, he illustrated the stories of *Muhaddithun* (traditionists), their great efforts in the collection and compilation of *Hadith*, their fortitude and hard work, the art of *Asma-urrijal* (records of the lives of narrators of *Hadith*), their carefulness in the collection and compilation of *Ahadith*, their extraordinary memories applied for the remembering of traditions, the crowd of students in *Hadith* classes and, the pious characters of these great traditionists etc. This book is a short sketch of the history of *Tadween* (establishment of the science of *Hadith*).

In the sixth chapter of the fifth volume of *Saviors of Islamic Spirit*, he has discussed in detail the importance of *Hadith* and its implication in every age of humankind's history. According to Ali Miyan, the *Hadith* is a perfect criterion for judging the right and wrong, the reformist and revivalist movements in the Islamic history. Moreover, he studied and discussed the development of Science of *Hadith* in India and the subcontinent.

Critical remarks

Ali Miyan's thought to Hadith and Hadith literature is moderate and revivalist. He thinks that Hadith provides a detail interpretation of the Qur'an. Therefore, the importance of Hadith is inevitable in understanding the true sense of Islam. To Ali Miyan, *Hadith* or *Sunnah* is the repository of the life and character, sayings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). They constitute the complex, which provides the climate in which faith thrives and bears fruit. Religion is not a compendium of legal edicts, wooden and dry. No faith can retain its warmth of feelings without presenting living examples of its teachings to infuse a life into its adherents. In a religion, the most potent and authentic information of religious events and their associated emotions and illustrations can only be provided by a portrayal of the life story of its founder. Judaism, Christianity and several other faiths lost their inner vitality due to the simple reason, that

they could not preserve reliable records of the life and character of their founders, deprived of this life giving source they were cut-off from the intellectual and spiritual climate which was necessary not only for the sustenance of faith and growth of religious spirit in the followers, but also that which could have saved it from the onslaught of materialism and agnosticism. Some of the leaders of these faiths realized this shortcoming and tried to fill in the void with manuals containing life accounts, sermons and table talks of their saints and holy men, but these efforts eventually proved to be a concoction of innovations and deviations, thereby distorting the original teachings of those faiths.²⁷

To Ali Miyan, the preservation of the life record of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is a distinctive asset of Islam. Because, the history of collection and compilation of *Hadith* reflects that this is not an accidental event or a *bidah* (innovation) of later ages. The inclination of companions (*Sahabah*) towards the collection and compilation of *Hadith* just started in the life time of the Prophet (pbuh) and recording of large number of Tradition, later, the development of the discipline of *Hadith* Science for analyzing the authenticity and categorization of *Hadith* by *Tabiun* (disciples of companions), as well as the mass gathering of the students of *Hadith* from Iran, Khurasan and

Turkistan etc. Their big sacrifices in learning, memorization, compilation, their extraordinary determination, and development of new Art of *Hadith* like *Asma-al-Rijal*²⁸, *Riwayat* and rising of great scholars of *Hadith*. As well as the inclination of whole *Ummah* towards the importance of *Hadith* and its publication and popularity among the *Ummah*, all these evidences are indicating that, after the preservation and compilation of *Qur'an*, *Hadith* is the most important source of Islam, and completely preserved for the coming generations.²⁹

Ali Miyan wrote, “Muhammad (pbuh) is the only Prophet (pbuh) whose life and teachings are still applicable to human problems in the vastly changed conditions of modern life. In the life of Prophet(pbuh) a rich man as well as a poor, a powerful man as well as a weak, a ruler as well as a trader, a husband and a father, a treaty maker as well as a ruler at war, a young man as well as an old can find practical guidance. He is the only one among the long queue of Prophets (pbut) whose life, both public and private, in all its multifarious details has been recorded by reliable observers with strict historical veracity. Everyone can seek guidance by his life and example”.³⁰

Chapter : 4

Notes and References:

1. Nadwi Abu Subhan Roohul Qudus, *Maulana Ali Miyan aur Ilmul Hadith*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2000, p. 9.
2. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, Raibareilly, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, 2001, p. 65.
3. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-1, Lucknow, Maktaba-e-Islam, Queen Road, 1997, pp. 143-44.
4. Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan, was a great scholar of *Hadith* and a student of Moulvi Nazeer Husain, Gulam Ahmad lahori, Maulana, Lutfullah Koweli, Maulana Ahmad Hasan Kanpuri and Shaykhul Islam Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani in addition to all, he was the Mureed (disciple) and Khalifa (successor) of Hazrat Haji Imdadulah Muhajir Makki.
5. Abu Subhan Roohul Qudus, *Maulana Ali Miyan aur Ilmul Hadith*, op.cit., p. 33. See also, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-1, op.cit., pp. 110-11.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

7. Shareh-: Commentry of a *Hadith* Book.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 34. See also, Subah-Sadiq, Nov 1956.
9. Leading Hanafite traditional seminary of Indian subcontinent, located in the town “Deoband” 150km from New Delhi near District Saharanpur, U.P. India.
10. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, op.cit., pp. 128-29.
11. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Puraney Chirag*, Vol-1, op.cit., p. 193. See also, Nadwi, Abu Subhan Roohul Qudus, *Maulana Ali Miyan aur ilm-ul-Hadith*, op.cit., pp. 35-36.
12. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Puraney Chirag* (three volumes), Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1997, p. 203.
13. Nadwi, Abu Subhan Roohul Qudus, *Maulana Ali Miyan and ilm-ul-Hadith*, op.cit., p.37.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
15. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islami mizaj aur mahol ki tashkeel me Hadith ka bunyadi kirdar*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1990, p. 73.

16. Siha-e-Sitta-: Six most authentic books of *Hadith* (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Ibn Majah, Nisai, Tirmizi).
17. Ibid., p. 62.
18. <http://www.nadwatululama.org/fragrance/characteroftheprophet.pdf>. See also, Nomani Maulana Manzoor, *Preface Muariful Hadith*, op.cit., pp. 6-8.
19. <http://www.nadwatululama.org/fragrance/characteroftheprophet.pdf>. See also, Ibid., pp. 8-9.
20. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islami mizaj aur mahol ki tashkeel me Hadith ka bunyadi kirdar*, op.cit., pp. 43-44. See also, <http://www.nadwatululama.org/fragrance/characteroftheprophet.pdf>.
21. Muhammad Asad, *Tufan se sahil tak* (The Road to Makkah), Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1980, pp. 132-33.
22. Ibid., p. 137.
23. Ibid., p. 142.
24. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Maghrib se kuch saaf saaf baten*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1973, p. 59.

25. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islami mizaj aur mahol ki tashkeel me Hadith ka bunyadi kirdar*, op.cit., pp. 17-18.
26. Ibid., p. 24.
27. Nomani Maulana Manzoor, Preface *Muariful Hadith*, Vol-1, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2003, pp. 5-6.
28. Asma-al-Rijal-: It is a branch of *Hadith* science dealt with the scrutiny of the narrators of *Hadith*.
29. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islami mizaj aur mahol ki tashkeel me Hadith ka bunyadi kirdar*, op.cit., p. 46.
30. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

CHAPTER 5

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO TASAWWUF AND TASAWWUF LITERATURE

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ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO TASAWWUF AND TASAWWUF LITERATURE

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was also one of the most important Islamic Scholar of *Tasawwuf* and *Tasawwuf* literature in the twentieth century. He has his own views, regarding *Tasawwuf*. He defends it with his strong logical approach, considering *Tasawwuf* as a prime part of religion required for the development of high moral values in its followers. He also termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin* (inner jurisprudence).¹ In this Chapter, we will deal with his introduction and adherence to *Tasawwuf*, his progress in later life and his moderate logical approach to it. As a reputed scholar, his thoughts regarding *Tasawwuf*, give a new look to the discipline. The expression of his thoughts and strong advocacy of his opinion balanced by logical reasoning presents '*Tasawwuf*' as an interesting goal and crucial factor to producing men of morality in Islamic history.²

Ali Miyan's early introduction to Tasawwuf

Ali Miyan belonged to an orthodox Muslim family and among his ancestors; Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was an eminent Sufi of his time. There were a number of other members of his

family, who were also popularly famed as great Sufis of their times, like *Ameer Qutubuddin*, *Qazi Sayyid Ahmad Naseer Abadi*, *Shaykh Fakhruddin Khayali* etc. To name a few his maternal grandfather *Shah Zia-un-Nabi* was also a great Sufi and was an ideal personality to whom many family members looked upto.³ But despite these family traditions, Ali Miyan remained a scholar of Islamic sciences until the age of 23 and had no formal exposure to *Tasawwuf*.

In his own words his first encounter to *Tasawwuf* follows, “I had never delved in the Sufi literature nor was familiar with the terminologies of *Tasawwuf*. However, my brother was fully aware of my taste and likings, for it was he who been the chief guide during my educational attainments. Our family had been intimately connected, at least for the last three hundred years, intellectually and spiritually, with the school of thought that belongs to Mujaddid Alf Thani and Shah Waliullah. The private library of my father had a three volumes collection of Mujaddid’s letters, printed at Ahmadi Press of Delhi. I started reading the book in compliance to my brother’s wishes, but was so discouraged that I had to put it off, more than once”.⁴ The letters written by Mujaddid to his mentor Khwaja Baqi Billah describing his spiritual experiences and ecstatic moods were especially disconcerting, but his brother kept on prodding him to go

through the letters along with the *Izalatul Khifa* of Shah Waliullah, *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed's '*Mansab-e-Imamat*'. When he started reading it, more he read the book, more fascinating it found. It attracted his interest as the best literary creations. To quote Ali Miyan, "I had read so far, I was at that time passing through a critical stage of my life in which certain mental distractions and intellectual stresses and strains had put me in turmoil. The book then became a spiritual guide to me. The Journey I had begun in obedience to my brother gave me an enthralling delight. I started reading, the Mujaddid's letters, after a short time with the intention of classifying the ideas expressed in it under different headings. I started preparing an index of the subjects dealt with in it, for example listing the passages dealing with the oneness of Allah and repudiation of Polytheistic ideas, Prophet hood, teachings of the Prophet(pbuh) and aberrations from it, innovations in Islam, unity of Being and Unity of Manifestation, reaches of intellect and institution so on".⁵

A brief history of Tasawwuf

Ali Miyan briefly explained the history of *Tasawwuf* in these words, "Imam Ibn Taymiyyah writes in the eleventh volume of his 'Fatawa', which consists of topics on '*Tasawwuf*'. Taymiyyah wrote, "The word Sufi was not known in the third century

Hijrah. It was only afterwards that it introduced. This word used by many *Shuyukh* (plural of Shaykh) and *Aimmah* (plural of imam) such as Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal, Abu Sulaymaan Darani, Sufyan Thauri, and Hasan Basri. Ulama hold different opinions regarding the root of this word. After quoting various opinions he says, “It is derived from wearing ‘*Suf*’ (woolen garment). Some Ulama mention that, it is extracted from the word ‘*Safa*’ (cleaning of impurity)”.⁶ To Ali Miyan, Sufi is one who absorbed in the thoughts of Allah, and to whom gold and stone have become equal (he is not tempted by wealth). These men, then rose from Sufi to the rank of Siddiq (truthful). Verily, after the Ambiyaa the best of creation are the Siddiqeen (plural of siddiq). The first Sufi jamat arose in Basra, and the founders of the first Khanqah⁷ were the Murids of Abdul Wahid bin Zayd, who was a disciple of Hasan Basri. Piety, devotion and the fear of Allah were renowned in Basra during this period. Therefore, the phrase, ‘Jurisprudence of Kufa and devotion of Basra’ became popular.⁸

Juristic value of Tasawwuf

According to Ali Miyan ‘*Tasawwuf*’ is not against Islamic spirit rather it is desirable practice. He proved, a few Ulama have disallowed this on the basis that it was an overstatement and, others have said, that ‘*Tasawwuf*’ not practiced by the *Sahabah*. The majority of Ulama (Scholars) however are of the opinion

that there is no objection if such things happened while in an overpowered state (of ecstasy), yet, it is more virtuous in remaining normal at all times. Hazrat Imam Ahmad was once questioned about the fainting and going into spiritual raptures. He replied, “Yahya bin Saeed Qattani, once fainted while reading the *Qur’an*. If there was anybody who could discourage this act then it was only Yahya bin Saeed himself, because I have not seen anyone more intelligent than him.”⁹

Further Ali Miyan asserts, it is narrated about Imam Shafii, that these states prevailed over him too. Consequently, stories of this nature related to many pious persons, whose integrity is undisputed. The examples related to the *Sahabah*, mentioned in the *Qur’an*, such as the washing of the heart and flowing of tears etc, is far more superior, it is only those who have strayed far off religion, and who have hard and rusted hearts can deny these states and conditions. This class of person is imperfect. On the other hand, some persons believe that, these conditions are the perfect and supreme. Both these classes overcome by extremes. There are realities and well-known conditions, pertaining to ‘*Tasawwuf*’ which ordinary men cannot realize.¹⁰

Ali Miyan emphasized, there are four categories of Men. The first lowest state is that of a self-oppressor who has a hard

heart, which not softened by listening to the *Qur'an* or by remembering Allah. About whom Allah has said,

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ
الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا
لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

“Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. Indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do”.
(*Qur'an* 2:74)

These people consists major part of Human beings. They have very little spiritual sense. Many of them have no concern of religion. The second state is that of pious believers who cannot endure inspirations because of a weakness in their hearts. They either faint or die. In worldly matters too, some people become insane or even die of excessive happiness or uncontrolled grief. If this stage befalls anyone, then without Transgression on his part, he is neither sinful nor suspected. Similarly, if one listens to the *Qur'an* without transgressing any law and an inspiration enters his heart due to which he becomes unconscious, Such a state is known as Fana or Sukr¹¹ In such a case it is not to be despised but

excused. The deciding factor of these states is that if the impacts are lawful and the beholder is truthful and unable to control himself, then this condition is praiseworthy. He is excuse from whatever happens to him unwillingly, such as fainting etc. These people are much better than those who cannot reach this rank because of weak faith, hardened hearts etc. The third state refers to those who do not lose their consciousness in spite of achieving the high degree of faith and these are superior and more exalted than those of the second stage are. *Sahabah* never lost their senses during the period of ecstasy. The highest degree of faith bestowed on Prophets (pbuh). This was the state of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also. An example can be cited of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) experienced ‘Meraj’¹² and many such things shown to him, yet his condition was unchanged the next morning. This state of the Prophet (pbuh) was more superior to that of Moses (pbuh) who fainted, while observing Divine manifestation at Mount Toor. Certainly, Moses’s (pbuh) state was cannot be questioned but Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had an even higher and sublime experience.¹³

Ali Miyan’s formal involvement in Sufistic activities

In the year 1931, Maulana Ali Miyan made his second visit to Lahore, to attend the classes of “*Hujjatullahil Baligah*” under Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. During his stay, Ali Miyan observed

the pious and devout life of Maulana Lahori and felt the urge to be a disciple of Maulana Lahori. On an occasion Ali Miyan, expressed his desire to him, but Maulana Lahori replied that his mentor, “*Hazrat Khalifa Ghulam Muhammad Dinpurwi*” is still alive, and hence it would be better to consult him regarding this issue. However, I can write a letter to him favoring you, which you will give to him. Therefore, Ali Miyan set for Dinpur. There he met Hazrat Khalifa, and gave him the letter. Therefore, Hazrat Khalifa took ‘Bait’ from him and recommended him, the “Zikr-e-Qalb” (silent remembrance of Allah). After a few days, Hazrat Khalifa passed away. Then, Ali Miyan came under the mentorship of, Maulana Lahori. The two showed a lot of correspondence and their association grew stronger with time.¹⁴

The following year Ali Miyan went to Lahore for the third time, on the recommendation of Maulana Lahori. The stay was for spiritual working out. Therefore, he stayed in a small room, which was in Badshahi Mosque of Lahore.¹⁵ This was his longest stay at Lahore. Later, he undertook many Journeys to Lahore to attend his mentor.¹⁶ In 1946, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori went for Haj (Pilgrimage). During the stay at Minah, he made a special Dua and Istikhara for Ali Miyan in *Masjid-e-Khaif*. There he received some spiritual directives. On his return to Lahore, he called Ali Miyan to Lahore. There he secretly declared Ali Miyan

as his Khalifa (Successor) in the Qadriyya Order of thought.¹⁷ After some years of this, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori died, and in the mean time the partition of India took place, therefore the journey to Lahore became difficult for Indians.

At this time, Ali Miyan introduced to a pious man, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi who founded a new reformist movement known as '*Tableeghi Jamaat*' in Delhi, and its outskirts in Mewat. Maulana Ali Miyan inspired very much by him, on observing the activities and efforts of his members.

He expresses about the Jamat, "in that trip the most amazing thing that I have observed and which give me thorough excitement was the efforts and activities of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and his members in the region of Mewat. It seems that, the scene, which I observed was, of 1st century Hijrah instead of the 20th century. The stories and social environment which we read about, the reformation, revolution and the urge of Jihad in the early New-Muslims of the era of Prophethood, are visible herein the Mosques and streets of Gurgoan, Nuh and Shahpur etc. It is a fact that, this chishti saint (Maulana Ilyas), revivalist and scholar of the Nizamuddin Locality sitting beside the grave of Nizamuddin Aulia is propagating Islam like Khwaja Moinuddin chishti and, defending religion like, Mujadid Alf Thani and Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed".¹⁸

In 1940, Ali Miyan went to Markaz Nizamuddin with two of his friends, Maulana Muhammad Manzoor Nomani and Haji Abdul Wahid. Due to the illness of his wife Maulana Manzoor Nomani returned to Lucknow, therefore these two went into the *Markaz* and was informed that Maulana Ilyas was not present. Therefore, they remained there and waited for his arrival. When Maulana Ilyas arrived, he was excited to meet Ali Miyan, and this first meeting with Maulana Ilyas was a remarkable event in Ali Miyan's life.

When Ali Miyan returned to Lucknow, he established the first centre for Tableegh there, and actively took part in its activities. Afterwards, many times he went to Nizamuddin and undertook a number of Journeys with Maulana Ilyas. Devotion in Tableeghi activities, made Maulana Muhammad Ilyas's confidence of Ali Miyan. Ali Miyan became very closer to Maulana Ilyas among all the members of Tableeghi Jamat. Due to his complete devotion to Tableegh, Ali Miyan intended to resign from teaching. For this, he consulted Maulana Ilyas who replied, "Our elders don't advice anyone to give up his means of earning till its alternate will be available".¹⁹ But soon after, he permitted Ali Miyan to give up his job.

Ali Miyan undertook many trips to different parts of the country and abroad for the sake of Tableegh. At a number of

places, Ali Miyan was the first person to introduce Tableeghi Movement and founded new centers of Tableegh particularly, at the Frontier province of Pakistan, Hyderabad, Sindh and many Gulf Countries. On 13th July 1944, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas departed for his heavenly abode. This was among one of the tragedies, which affected Ali Miyan's life and his soul. This was the end of the second phase of the mystic career of Ali Miyan.²⁰

After the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, Ali Miyan went under the mentorship of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri.²¹ Soon Ali Miyan became more attached to his mentor than his other colleagues. Ali Miyan performed Haj with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri in 1950, and this association lasted until 1962 when Maulana Abudl Qadir Raipuri died.

Ali Miyan met Maulana Raipuri for the first time in 1940. His affectionate nature, deep political approach, worldly awareness, spiritual insight, foresightedness, great heartedness, deep thought, fact full approach and above all his complete devotion to religious and mystic activities, were the qualities, which Ali Miyan found as a source of inspiration. The Maulana's observations affected Ali Miyan's thought and a strong urge rose in him to be his Murid (disciple). However, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori was the first mentor of Ali Miyan but due to the partition of India, it had become difficult for him to visit his mentor

frequently, and to consult him in all issues. Secondly, Maulana Lahori and Raipuri were close friends and Maulana Lahori had a great respect for Maulana Raipuri. In the mean time, also unfortunately, Maulana Ilyas died in 1944. Maulana Ali Miyan was actively involved in Tableeghi activities during the lifetime of Maulana Ilyas and there was no need for Ali Miyan to turn to any other person in the lifetime of Maulana Ilyas. But, after his death Ali Miyan felt the need to choose a new spiritual guide who had equal experience and status of Maulana Lahori and Maulana Muhammad Ilyas. According to the observations and experiences of Ali Miyan, Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri was appropriate for this purpose in all parameters. Raipuri was among the few great mystics of contemporary India. Even Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in his last days recommended his members to consult Maulana Raipuri in spiritual matters.²² One of the closest friends of Ali Miyan, Shaykhul *Hadith* Maulana Muhammad Zakariya advised him many times to join Maulana Raipuri. When the two met, both were satisfied with the association with each other, Ali Miyan was excited to find his new guide and an appropriate person while Maulana Raipuri was excited to have an able and brilliant disciple. Their respect for each other can be traced in their letters, which they sent to each other, in which they have used very respectable titles for each other. This relationship

became stronger eventually. Maulana Raipuri visited Lucknow seven times and *Daira Shah Alamullah* more than four times.

On a visit to *Daira Shah Alamullah*, when Maulana Raipuri was coming outside the mosque with Ali Miyan, he secretly appointed Ali Miyan as his Khalifa (successor) through all four Sufi orders as well as in the order of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed which is known as 'Tariqa-e-Muhammadia'.²³

After the death of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Raipuri, Ali Miyan chose to be under the guidance of Shaykhul *Hadith* Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya.²⁴ He was the last spiritual guide of Ali Miyan, and he died in 1982.²⁵

Ali Miyan's works on Tasawwuf

1. Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat (Saviours of Islamic Spirit)

Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat, is a collection of lectures delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, at Lucknow, under the title "*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*".²⁶ As it is obvious from the title, this work consists of the biographies of few towering personalities of Islamic history who were regarded as "*Revivalists of Islam in their ages*". During the long span of thirteen hundred years of its existence, Islam underwent different phases. Sometimes it emerged as a strongest political and intellectual

power and sometimes it became too weak to think of its recovery. According to Ali Miyan reformers, leaders and scholars produced by Islam during its sovereignty were of no more higher caliber than those born in its age of decadence.

In “*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*” Maulana Ali Miyan demonstrates “there have been great revivalist personalities throughout Islamic history. Whenever, the religion of Allah attacked either, from within or from outside, Allah sends men of the hour equipped with the right kind of scholarship and spiritual strength to correct the wrongs of the age and show the way. Therefore, he has in this book he presented the continuous history of the revival of Islam through the biographies of these great revivalists. Because, in history we find only the events with Kings and Emperors or biographical accounts of certain eminent luminaries, but no account has been found, of the revivalist personalities and movements of Muslims and speculative achievements of all those great servants who have left an indelible mark on Islamic world. These champions have bravely fought against the forces of corruption and *bidah* (innovations), defended the original Islamic precepts and teachings, and rejuvenated the true spirit of Islam along with making valuable contributions to the intellectual and academic treasures. The book present an account of these continuous efforts, made

during the past thirteen hundred years, for reawakening the Muslims. It highlights the name of those eminent servants, who rose to the defense of Islam in order to arrest the onslaught of the evil forces and who gave rise to various movements for the purpose of upholding Islamic morals and values and finally their efforts made it possible for Islam to survive to this day. Most of them were identified as Mujaddids (revivalists). Also, some important personalities mentioned in this book which cannot be called as Mujaddids but who have worked for the renovation and regeneration of the Islamic faith and practice and the subsequent generations of Muslims have ever remain indebted to them.

The first volume is comprised of the biographies of the revivalist personalities of the first eight centuries after Hijrah. The second volume contains the achievements of Ibn-e-Taymiyyah and the biographies of those remarkable revivalists of India who have been the fountainhead of call to religion and renovation of Islamic thought. The third volume contains a detailed study of Mughal India. The social and religious conditions of India from Babar to Jahangir, as well as the great efforts of Shaykh Ahmad Sarhindi, to defend and preserve the true Islamic spirit, from the illegitimate attacks of King Akbar.

2. Tazkiya wa Ahsan ya Tasawwuf o Suluk (Tazkiya and Ahsan or Tasawwuf and Suluk)

It is most important work of Ali Miyan, which reflects in detail the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Tasawwuf*. As its title displays *Tazkiya, Ahsan, Tasawwuf and Suluk*, which means Purification of soul, Devotion, Sufi Thought and Spiritual stages respectively. The first two terms (Tazkiya and Ahsan) were used in *Qur'an* and *Hadith* respectively. While the later two (Tasawwuf and Suluk) were used in by Sufis and coined in later days. Ali Miyan tried to explain that, the concept of *Tasawwuf* found in *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. In *Qur'an*, the word *Tzakiya* used for the purpose of *Tasawwuf* and in *Hadith Ahsan* used for the same. Thus *Tasawwuf* is not anti Islamic or a Bidat (innovation) though the word *Tasawwuf* is not used in both.

Ali Miyan pointed out that, there are two very difficult and unavoidable stages encountered in all doctrines, be they ethics, education and training, reformation, sciences etc. The first is the stage where the means turn to objectives, and the other, where technical terms obscure the realities. Both the means and the technical terms are essential, without which the propagation and expansion, teaching and explanation of these high objective is practically impossible. However, be they, the

means or the technical terms, in achieving the aims and realities, their function is that to express the aim properly. Therefore, they adopted temporarily for the fulfillment of a necessity. Nevertheless, sometimes these technical terms, over emphasized and deemed as just objective or goal. When an expert deems its necessity, he gives instruction to do without means, or completely drop the means and technical terms. However, in the case of *Tasawwuf* some immature Sufis over emphasized these means, which in result generate the misconceptions in the minds of common people. Therefore, instead of conveying to goal, they become an obstacle. A historical fact, which has to be acknowledged, is that, such a misfortune befalls lofty ideals, where means become the objective and technical terms obscure realities with a thick veil. Not only were they obscured but also, the bitter experiments and grave errors of the flag bearers of these technical terms gave rise to such grievous misunderstandings that a great number of true and upright people have learnt to dread and dislike its real aim and realities. It has now become a very difficult task to make them recognize and value these realities, so that they make efforts to attain these goals. If whenever a discourse to denote the importance of acquiring these aims is delivered, or an effort to satisfy them is made, they are confronted with an enormous mountain of 'means' which immature and unauthorized reformers exaggerate

and force them to perform. These reformers themselves become so confused that the actual aim totally forgotten and disregarded. Similarly, when the call for these undisputed realities made, it obscured by technical terms. Generally, technical terms had to explain realities and to draw people towards understanding them. This was done due to particular reasons, according to the demands of the social structures and the special situations, which prevailed in different times. Those who experienced these realities, and whose lives were a true reflection of these facts, were unacquainted with these technical terms. They used different words, expressions and ways to explain these realities. If a study is made of the history of any science, whatever etymology, syntax, rules, dialect, Balaghat (rhetoric), spiritual reformation, it found that the earlier ones were in full control of the means, whereas the latter ones, controlled by the means. The authorized experts were propagators and inviters while the novices were captives of their mentors, and the technical terms. This became an agonizing factor in the path of the exalted aims of religion, ethics, skills and sciences. Students throughout the ages, confronted by this difficult test. As far as the aims and objectives are concerned, they are self-evident undisputed. *Tasawwuf* has been adversely affected by the following two factors: one that, the means were exaggerated and the second that the technical terms were over emphasized and insisted on.

Ali Miyan argued, if a person is questioned, are loyalty and ethics important or not? Is it necessary to develop a firm belief or not? Is it commendable to be adorned with virtues and be free from vice, such as jealousy, Kibr (to be extremely proud), to show off, bear malice and hatred, love for wealth and honor or not? Is it desirable to liberate the Nafs from these evil tendencies? Humility and humbleness in prayers, the state of modesty weeping in Dua, and above all, the love for Allah and His Messenger (pbuh), achievement of a feeling of satisfaction and sweetness or at least to be eager and punctual to attain it, clean dealings, truth and trust, having regard for the rights of humankind, control over ones selfishness especially in times of anger, are all these desirable or not?, Then, every sensible person, particularly the Muslim who is not blindfolded by prejudice, will definitely give this answer: These are not only virtuous but also necessary according to the *Shariah*, and these are the motivations by *Qur'an* and *Hadith*. The method of acquiring these qualities is what the later generations named as "*Tasawwuf*", they react with a grimace because they are dismayed by this term. Others would disapprove because of their bitter experiences with false Sufi saints. They would recall unpleasant incidents and observations that they encountered with them. This is not the case with *Tasawwuf* only. It is the problem with all other skills and reformations, where there will be found,

amongst their propagators, administrators and missionaries, those who are genuine and those who are false, the authorized and the unauthorized, the mature and the immature, and even the faithful and the faithless. In spite of this opposing type, no wise person will deny the necessity of *Tasawwuf* nor will criticize it. In worldly professions too, whether it is business, agriculture, industry, or artisanship, both the experts and the novice are present. One, the guide and other the deceiver. Yet, the affairs of the world and religion are running. One must adopt it for his own benefit and not to give up these treasures due to, inexperienced claimants, nor cast aside the actual reality because of disagreement with any technical term.

3. Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed (Biography of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed)

Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was the first book written by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi at the age of 23. Ali Miyan himself belonged to Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed's family. The book is a biographical sketch of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Sayyid Shah Ismail Shaheed, and their movement of *Islah* (reformation) and *Jihad*.

Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was a '*Wali*' (saintly person) who started his career as a Sufi. Masses of Muslims joined him as

Murids (spiritual disciples), but later due to some political and social reasons, he turned into a Sufi Mujahid and started the movement of “*Islah and Jihad*”, which had some affinities to the *Muwahhidun* (Unitarian) movement of Arabia.²⁷ Though he did not succeed in forming an Islamic State among the tribes of the North-West Frontier of the Indian subcontinent, by owing to the disloyalty of some Muslim Chieftains of North Frontier. At last, he was martyred (shaheed) at the battlefield of Balakot in 1831. However, the movement continued for several decades after his death, and the impact of the movement lasted for much longer. Thus, the history of the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed is a remarkable event in Indian History.

It was the first work on the subject. The Tales and stories were scattered in several other books or in the memory of elder members of the family. Therefore, Maulana Ali Miyan collects the matter from all authentic sources and compiled the book, which extremely appreciated by academic and religious sections. The book also illustrates the moral and religious temper and daily life of the army of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. They have spiritual and moral values, and exactly deserve to be remembered in the history. They in a way, reflect the Islamic life of the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions.

The book stimulates the sentiment of Iman in the heart of the reader and provokes him to follow the true spirit of the religion.

4. Sawaneh Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri (Biography of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri)

As we have stated earlier that after the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, Ali Miyan increased his adherence with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri and consider him as his mentor. After the death of Maulana Raipuri, Ali Miyan wrote a detailed biography of his mentor under the title *Sawaneh Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri*. In this book, Ali Miyan discussed in detail the spiritual life of his mentor and extensively recorded his daily schedule and Sufistic practices. Along with this, Ali Miyan gave useful information about *Tasawwuf*. Therefore, it is well accepted and most referred book of Ali Miyan in Sufistic circles.

Critical remarks

From the above discussion, it appears that Ali Miyan had a deep insight in theory and practice of *Tasawwuf*. He was not merely a scholar but a leading personality in the area. However, he was the disciple of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori yet he was, impressed by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed's Sufi thought. He considered him as his role model in *Tasawwuf*.²⁸ Ali Miyan was

also influenced by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi. His own approach regarding *Tasawwuf* was balanced and clear. He considered *Tasawwuf* as an essential factor in developing the true spirit of religion in a man. According to him, *Tasawwuf* plays a vital role in the development of great Muslim personalities throughout Islamic history. Knowledge only cannot make men of high morals and pious character, purification of the mind and the heart is equally necessary for one's personality development, which can easily attained through *Tasawwuf*.²⁹

Ali Miyan highlighted that, Islam is a religion of moderation. It is not a dry and prosaic religion as some may be inclined to imagine. Its beauty, grandeur, appeal and sublimity are unsurpassable. It rests on eternal truths whose charms are captivating and exhilarating. It prescribes certain minimum acts of worship and it calls upon man to perform them in loving devotion and to respond to them from the depth of his heart. It is a celestial call, which sinks into the heart of a man and permeates his whole being. There are numerous verses of the *Qur'an* and scores of *Ahadith* calling upon man to love Allah with fervor, and to remember Him constantly with devotion and humility. It is no doubt that man has been created as Allah's bondman, but a favorite bondman, the most esteemed creation of Universe, in

whose service every object and force of nature has been directed. However, man can fall to the lowest of the low or rise to the highest of the high.

Authenticating *Tasawwuf* logically he advocated against those, who consider *Tasawwuf* as a later day innovation and, at the best, it falls in the category of permissible, which have to be avoided, as it breeds stagnation, defeatism and an escape from realities of life. To Ali Miyan, *Tasawwuf* is as old as Islam. All the Prophets (pbut) practiced it. It is the essence of Faith and the soul of Islam. Its basic ingredients are consciousness and a living realization of the omnipotence of Allah (*Tauheed*) in all its implications, adoption and love of Allah, purification of the heart and righteousness. It constitutes the very base of religion. It calls upon man to inculcate in himself the qualities of piety, sincerity, patience, steadfastness, and gratitude to Allah. Alongside, it should not be judged, by the conduct of fraudulent pretenders or worldly men calling themselves, Sufis, so, there are false Ulama who are to be avoided according to *Hadith*.

Tasawwuf is such a vast, profound and sublime subject that one cannot explain it within few words. Its depth and dimensions can be experienced but cannot be appropriately express. It includes purification of the Nafs (selfness), inculcation of the noblest qualities, adopting attributes of Allah, attainment of love

for Allah, His Marifat (Gnosis). When man reaches this state, the reality of eternal values dawns upon him, and a new horizon of the “Beyond”³⁰ opened up before him. Then man begins to live in accordance with Allah’s values and receives reciprocally love, which is thrilling, captivating, ecstatic and all absorbing.

Disapproving the critics of Sufis he contends that , to deny the services of the great Sufi Saints in expansion and establishment of Islam is to deny a well accepted and well established truth and thereby an important aspect of the history of Islam”.³¹

Ali Miyan asserts, *Tasawwuf* is not a *Qur’anic* word nor can it be found in *Hadith* literature but other words, can be found which are equivalent to it, like “*Tazkiya*” in the *Qur’an*, and “*Ahsan*” in *Hadith*.³² These are some groups of people which opposed *Tasawwuf*. One group comprises those who accept its constituents separately, but deny it if it is referred to as a whole. The majority of the people applaud the aforementioned aim and qualities separately, but if it be said to them that, Some people have for some reasons given all these qualities a common name “*Tasawwuf*”, then their colours change instantly and they say, ‘We don’t believe in *Tasawwuf*, it has caused great harms’. The other group is of those to whom it is acceptable if it proposed under a different name. For example if it is said, “The *Qur’an* has termed it ‘*Tazkiyah*’ (cleaning). The *Hadith* names it ‘*Ahsan*’, and later

jurists termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin*".³³ They would then reply that there is no reason for contradiction and all these are declarations of Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

Verily, neither alterations can make to all the books written, nor the tongues of men can be withheld. Otherwise, if we were given the option, we should have referred to it by the words 'Tazkiyah' and 'Ahsan' and not used the word '*Tasawwuf*'. Now this is the popular name. Likewise, the history of the arts and sciences is full of such common technical terms. Authorities on sciences have all along laid stress on the aims and kept the means within their limits. They not only refuted, that which was foreign to the soul, essence, and real goal of science, but they have also refuted that, which proved harmful and irrelevant.

Ali Miyan, acknowledge, there is no such period in the history of Islam in which the experts, tutors and propagators of this subject did not differentiate between its body and soul, reality and form, aims and customs. Such as, Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani, Shaykh Shahabuddin Suharwardi, Mujaddid Alfe Thani, Hazrat Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed, Shah Ismail Shaheed, Hazrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi and Hakimul Ummat Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, all have emphatically made a clear distinction between the kernel and shell, the correct object and the incorrect interpretation. They have vehemently

rejected all those customs and innovations which were introduced into and regarded as part of *Tasawwuf* and *Tariqat* by Non-Muslims and immature Sufis, due to unaware of the reality.³⁴

Chapter : 5

Notes and References:

1. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tazkiyah wa Ahan ya Tasawwuf-o-Sulook*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1985, p. 37.
2. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, Vol-1, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1971, pp. 24-25
3. Nadwi Rabey Hasani, *Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi ek ahd saaz shaksiyat*, op.cit., pp. 92-93. See also, Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., pp. 52-53.
4. Ibid., pp. 122-23.
5. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tazkiyah wa Ahan ya Tasawwuf-o-Suluk*, op.cit., pp. 37-38.
6. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, Vol-1, op.cit., pp. 75-76.
7. Khanqah:- Sufi seminary.
8. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, Vol-1, op.cit., pp. 33-34.

9. Ibid, p. 41.
10. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tazkiyah wa Ahan ya Tasawwuf-o-Sulook*, op.cit., p. 44.
11. Fana or Sukr:- It is a spiritual stage in which a Sufi lost his consciousness.
12. It is a famous incident of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) life in which, The Holy Prophet (pbuh) visited heavens physically with the Angel Jibraeel.
13. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Saviors of Islamic Spirit*, op.cit., pp. 37-38.
14. Nadwi Rabey Hasani, *Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi ek ahd saaz shaksiyat*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2006, p. 93. See also, Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, Raibareilly, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, 2001, p. 131. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Purane Chiragh*, Vol-I, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1997, pp. 148-50.
15. For three months he stayed in Bad Shahi Mosque, isolated from worldly affairs and devoted his time to spiritual training and mystic activities like Prayer, Recitation of

Qur'an, Zikr (Remembrance of Allah), Muraqba (Meditation) etc.

16. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., pp. 136-37. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Purane Chiragh*, op.cit., p. 146.
17. Ibid., pp. 220-21.
18. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Maulana Muhammad Ilyas aur onki Deeni Dawat*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2007, pp. 66-77.
19. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Makateeb Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ilyas*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2000, pp. 42-43. See also, Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Sawaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam*, op.cit., p. 203.
20. Qasmi Mumshad Ali, *Hazrat Maulana Sayyid Abul hasan Ali nadwi Akaabir o Mashaahir-e-ummat ki nazar me*, Phulat Muzaffarnagar U.P., Shah Waliullah Academy, 1998, pp. 46-47. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Maulana Muhammad Ilyas aur onki Deeni Dawat*, op.cit., pp. 66-67.
21. Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri was one of the leading Sufis of Northern India living at that time in the town Raipur, of District Saharanpur U.P.

22. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Sawaneh Hazrat Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1987, pp. 56-57.
23. Ibid., p. 62. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-2, Lucknow, Maktaba-e-Islam, Queen Road, 1997, pp. 352-53. See also, Nadwi Rabey Hasani, *Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi ek ahd saaz shaksiyat*, p.95.
24. Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya was a well-known scholar and teacher of *Hadith* in the Madrasah Mazahir-al-Uloom of Saharanpur U.P, he was also an eminent Sufi of the time.
25. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Sohbat-e-ba-ahle-Dil*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1979, pp.128-29. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Ziindagi* Vol-1, op.cit., pp. 376-77.
26. *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, is a collection of lectures delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, at Lucknow at a convention organized by “Jamat-e-Dawat-o-Tableegh” in Muharram 1372 A.H. Later on, these lectures published collectively with further additions under the title “*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*”. It also rendered in English under the title “Saviors of Islamic Spirit”.

27. Therefore, the movement labeled as 'Wahhabi' by the British in India.
28. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2003, p. 91.
29. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*, Vol-1, op.cit., pp. 19-20.
30. World of eternal truths like, Angles and other intangible creations of God.
31. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Asr-e-hazir men Deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1983, pp. 32-33.
32. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tazkiyah wa Ahan ya Tasawwuf-o-Sulook*, op.cit., p. 54.
33. Inner/Spiritual Jurisprudence, Ibid., p. 84.
34. Ibid., pp. 46-47.

CHAPTER 6

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO *FIQH* (ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE)

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Background

Maulana Abul Hasan Nadwi received the education of Islamic Jurisprudence from an eminent teacher Maulana Shibli of Nadwa. But later, he did not involve himself much with the subject, neither has he written any book regarding the subject. However, we can trace his views regarding '*Fiqh*' from different books written by him, like *Saviors of Islamic Spirit*, *Four pillars of Islam* and some of his addresses in the conference of *Islamic Fiqh Academy*.

Ali Miyan's approach was rational and moderate unlike the traditional Ulama who were rigid and radical regarding Islamic Jurisprudence. Though, he was a Hanafite and firmly practiced his Maslak (creed), yet he condemned the rigid outlook.¹ Due to this, a vast majority of Muslim *Ummah* appreciated his viewpoint. Even non-Hanfites like, Arab scholars, politicians and even people of the masses, have admired him.

Ali Miyan also believed that, different schools of thought in Islamic Jurisprudence reflect the diversity of Islamic culture. No

one of them is more preferable to the other. The conflict among different schools of jurisprudence is Un-Islamic and an act of Ignorance.²

Fiqh and Tadween (its establishment)

Ali Miyan avows, establishment of *Fiqh* is very important Islamic event. It is an outstanding characteristic of Islam that, it provides such a diversified look to Islamic Jurisprudence. It is a heavenly occurrence because Allah is willing for establishment of *Fiqh*. So that, Islam will be able to solve, every problem related to human life. In the words of Ali Miyan, “Allah has created the world and all living beings. He has provided the need for physical requirements to all living beings other than man, in whose case he has provided need for the physical body as well as the spiritual. Since the requirements of the soul are beyond the capabilities of man, therefore He sends his messengers (pbut) for the guidance of humankind in every age. In the end, He sent his final messenger, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with a complete religion and final constitution of life, which has complete and satisfactory guidance for humankind, which will last the day of judgment. It provides all required guidance to man, for his body as well as the soul. This whole constitution is termed as Islamic *Shariah*. Deep study and understanding of the Islamic *Shariah* is

termed as *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence). One who studies it is termed as ‘*Faqih*’³.

Ali Miyan believes, the commandments of Allah which were given in the form of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* and later all the other issue which were extracted from them, by the method of *Ijma* and *Qiyas*, are all together termed as *Shariah*. To him ‘*the purpose of Shariah is Salvation of man in both the worlds*’. This is difference between the Modern law and *Shariah* that, Modern law only deals with worldly matters and have no concern with the issues of life after death. From the above illustration, it is clear that *Shariah* covers all walks of human life equally, whether it is personal or social. That is why there is no categorization in laws like Personal law and common law as in the Modern law system. In addition to this the laws of *Shariah* are too deep, follow able and flexible as well as compatible to the modern age.⁴ Therefore it has the ability to provide satisfactory solution to every issue related to human life whether it would be personal, social, physical or spiritual, political and judicial, in every age of human history. It is not merely an imagination but it is a matter of fact. It can be observed that in the Middle Ages, when Islam spread to vast areas and great kingdoms were established under its flag, new issues were faced due to diversified culture, these new issues dealt with Judiciary, Social

and Political issues such as Taxation, *Zammis*, *Kharaj*, and Inheritance etc. The great Jurists of the time solved these quests without any delay. It was not done on a small scale rather four regular schools of Jurisprudence⁵ were established. This vast and tremendous work of extracting solutions of legal issues according to Islamic Shariah by a large number of *Fuqaha* (Jurists, plural of *Faqih*) is collectively termed as *Tadween*.⁶

To quote Ali Miyan, “There is no need for Muslims to consult and depend on other resources regarding any single issue. These four schools of jurisprudence have made a viable contribution to the subject. There is no need of *Ijtihad* on the issues, which were already solved by these great jurists”.⁷ But even then, Maulana Ali Miyan did not overlook the significance and need of *Ijtihad* on new arising issues. Because Islam is fully compatible to the changing world and it is necessary to discuss and solve these new issues, therefore *Ijtihad* is the requirement of the day. However, it should be done according to its rules and limits, encoded by the expert jurists.⁸

Ijtihad

Islam is the last and final message of Allah to the humankind. It announced in the *Qur'an*:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۗ

Today I perfected your religion. For you, completed my favor upon you and chosen for you, Islam as your religion. (Qur'an 05:03).

On the one hand, it is clear that Islam is complete and nothing else needs to be added to it and nothing needs to be changed in it. It is also a fact that life is changing continuously and the world introduced to new changings and revolutions every coming day, This doesn't mean that Islam is unable to guide humankind in these changed circumstances, simply because Islamic law is flexible and has the full capacity to guide mankind in even changed conditions. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the last Prophet and there will be no Prophet after him and no Divine law will reveal after Islam.⁹ Muhammad's (pbuh) apostleship is till the Last day, therefore there is capability in Islam to work under every circumstance till the Last day, because Allah has created this religion for entire humankind, irrespective of caste, color and creed. In the words of Ali Miyan, "Islam is the complete constitution of life and is based on firm foundations, to work in every age of humankind, in the past, present and even in the future. It is so vast and complete in nature that there is no need to consult any other religion and law or to wait for another message. Though it delivered in the age of camels but it has full potential to guide man in the modern age also. Therefore, it is essential to find solutions of new arising issues with the time to

make Islamic *Shariah* compatible with the modern age. There is complete method of finding solutions to new arising issues. This method of finding the solutions of new upcoming issues according to Islamic *Shariah* is termed as *Ijtihad*".¹⁰

He thinks that, in every age of Islamic history, the method of *Ijtihad* was used by great Jurists to find out the solution of new issues in the light of *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Till date, the importance of *Ijtihad* hasn't decrease because in the modern world due to the rapid development of Science and Technology, and changing life style new issues continuously arise. Therefore, it strongly needed, to discuss and solve them according to the Islamic *Shariah*. In addition, the Islamic *Shariah* should be written in modern style and updated regularly, so that it is not claimed that Islamic *Shariah* is outdated. As Allama Iqbal has stated "I believe that the man who will criticize the modern law logically and prove the completeness and evenness of *Qur'anic* law, the person will be the revivalist of the age and the greatest servant of Islam of modern time".¹¹

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was among those scholars who were strong supporters of continuing *Ijtihad*, but within its laws and limits. He did not favour the reestablishment of *Fiqh*, which was already established by the great jurists of Islam, because he believed that, these eminent jurists of the Middle

Ages were experts of the field and their work was matchless as well as profound. It is worthless to make efforts on the issues that previously solved by these eminent jurists. In addition, it is dangerous for the Muslim *Ummah*, because there is a doubt of rising of controversies and new sects with it. Moreover, it is very difficult for an individual or an institution to do the work, done by these eminent jurists with such a caliber and devotion. These eminent jurists were the deserving personalities for this great task.¹²

Nevertheless, it does not mean that Maulana Ali Miyan was against *Ijtihad* neither did he believe in closing the doors of *Ijtihad* forever. He favored *Ijtihad* on the new emerging issues, which were not imaginable in the time of those great jurists.

Thus, *Ijtihad* should be done for solving the new arising issues, but not for previous issues already solved by the great jurists.

Condemning radical approach regarding Taqleed

Maulana Ali Miyan strongly condemned the misuse of *Ijtihad*. At the same time, he severely criticized the radical and extreme approach towards Taqleed.¹³ To quote him, “gradually the ignorance perpetuated among the people. They considered the four jurists as sources instead of mediators and researchers.

They considered these juristic schools as whole Islam. Due to this, sectarian feelings emerged against others. As a result, acts of violence occurred numerous times. In any situation, these people did not agree to let their juristic norms even, their mistakes be proved according to *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. The common people were not much responsible for this because they were not aware of the facts, also they had a simple intention, to follow *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* through these mediums of juristic schools. In addition, it becomes difficult and dangerous for them to consult directly the original sources and extract the true solution because it may lead to misconceptions. However, the scholars (Ulama) were fully responsible for the violence due to their extreme and radical thought. Their attitude was such that, if any decision of their jurists contradicted with the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, they would give many strong evidences from original sources against their jurist's decision. They did not agree to give up their ideas even after all evidences went against them".¹⁴

His personal practice

Maulana Ali Miyan did not write clearly about his personal practice regarding *Fiqh*. However, we can trace it from his works like "*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*" and "*Carvan-e-Zindagi*" etc, as well as from his family members. Maulana Ali Miyan belonged to the Hanafi School regarding *Fiqh*, and he was firm in his faith and

practice but simultaneously he was moderate in his approach. Many times he performed Jama-baina-Salatain (performing two salats in the same time during journey), which is not in practice among the Hanafites.¹⁵ He also learnt from different Scholars of Islamic world who did not belong to his School of Jurisprudence.¹⁶ He always hated and discouraged rigid approach regarding *Fiqh*.

Once he visited a Hanafite *madrasah* and stayed there for three days as a guest. He was informed that, '*Due to performing Raza-Yadin and saying Ameen loudly, during Salat by a student, the authorities of the Madrasah terminated the student*'. Ali Miyan intentionally performed *Raza-yadin* and said *Ameen* loudly all the time during his stay at the *Madrasah* though he was a Hanafite himself.¹⁷

Due to the reason of his moderate and liberal approach, he was popular and admired by all Juristic schools equally, not only in India but also in the entire Islamic world. The intellectuals from all schools of Jurisprudence have appreciated his reformist ideas openheartedly.

Critical remarks

Originally, Ali Miyan was a scholar of Islamic history and Arabic literature; therefore, he has no extensive works on

Islamic Jurisprudence. Very small quantity of literature available on Islamic jurisprudence by Ali Miyan, unlike Islamic history and Arabic literature. However, Ali Miyan's attitude towards Fiqh is balanced and flexible. He severely condemned extremist attitudes to Fiqh. Simultaneously he appreciated the great services of the great Jurists and valued all of them equally. To Ali Miyan, all four schools of Fiqh are reliable to follow. They guided the Muslim *Ummah* successfully, their importance and need was not ignorable.¹⁸ Due to their efforts and determination the Islamic Jurisprudence attained such an outstanding position that no other faith has such a developed and complete Juristic system as Islam has. But this doesn't mean that the doors of *Ijtihad* should be closed and there be no need of further *Ijtihad*, because the issues and lifestyle is changing all the time and it is impossible to stop this changing trend or to pause the clock.¹⁹

Particularly after the technical advancement, in the modern age, human beings, on a daily basis, face new issues and circumstances. Therefore, it is the call of time to search for satisfactory solution. However, it should be done by the experts of the field, within limits and conditions, which were directed by eminent jurists.

Shah Waliullah has rightly observed, "*Ijtihad* is *Farz-bil-Kifayah* in every age. But here, by the word *Ijtihad* we don't

mean the “*Ijtihad-e-Mustaqil*” as was done by Imam Shafii and Imam Abu Hanifa etc, but the “*Ijtihad-e-Muntasib*” which means to know the commandments of *Shariah* in depth and details”.²⁰

Ali Miyan advised, it is safer to do collective *Ijtihad* instead of at the Individual level. For this purpose, there should be a Committee of expert jurists, in which there should be long thinking sessions, discussions, debates, as well as complete analyzing of original sources for the quest of the solution of an issue.²¹

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Notes and References:

1. Nadwi, Munawwar Sultan, *Nadwatul Ulama ka Fiqhi mizaj aur abna-e-nadwa ki Fiqhi Khidmaat*, Lucknow, Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi Academy, 2005, p. 107. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand Fiqhi Mubahisaat*, Lucknow, Al mahad al aali lil Qaza wal Ifta, Nadwatul Ulama, 2007, p. 45.
2. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, op.cit., p. 58.
3. Ibid., pp. 68. See also, Munawwar Sultan, *Nadwatul Ulama Ka Fiqhi mizaj aur Abnaey Nadwa ki Fiqhi Khidmaat*, op.cit., pp. 114-15.
4. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, op.cit., pp. 12-13.
5. Four regular schools of Jurisprudence are:- Hanafi School, Maliki School, Shafii School and Hambali School.
6. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
7. Ibid., p. 23.

8. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Ijtimai Ijtihad*, Lucknow, Al mahad al aali lil Qaza wal Ifta, Nadwatul Ulama, 2007, pp. 23-24.
9. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
10. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, op.clt., pp. 20-21.
11. Ibid., p. 69.
12. Ibid., p. 17-21. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, op.cit., p. 68.
13. Taqleed:- blind invitation.
14. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, pp. 31-32.
15. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Lucknow, Maktaba-e-Islam, Queen Road, 1997, p. 258.
16. Ibid., pp. 245-46.
17. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Hazrat Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Dawat-o-Fikr kay aham Pehlu*, Raibareilly, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, 2007, pp. 510-11. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, p. 159.
18. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fiqhi Mubaahis*, op.clt., p. 23.

19. Munawwar Sultan, *Nadwatul Ulama Ka Fihi mizaj aur Abnaey Nadwa ki Fihi Khidmaat*, op.cit., pp. 83-84.
20. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Tadween-e-Fiqah aur chand aham Fihi Mubaahis*, pp. 41.
21. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Ijtimai Ijtihad*, op.cit., pp. 23-24.

CHAPTER 7

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT RELATED TO WEST

Introduction of Ali Miyan to the West

Though Ali Miyan was, a great Islamic Scholar received his education from Madrasah but keenly observed the Western culture and its negative impacts on humankind. According to Ali Miyan, the Western civilization is based on materialistic thought. There is no scope for spirituality and morality in it. This is because its origin based on Greek philosophy and thoughts. The West has a genealogical relation with the Greek civilization. Whereas, the Greek civilization was purely materialistic and there is no or very little scope for spirituality in it. We are explaining here the fundamentals of the Greek Civilization.

Distrust in spiritual truths, worship of material comfort, exaggerated communalism were the outstanding features of Greek civilization.¹

The Greeks did not believe in God without giving him physical forms and shapes, and making images of his attributes and installing them in their temples. A logical list on ten kinds of gods with different shapes and “Categories” was included in Aristotle’s writings.²

An appropriate interpretation of the Greek civilization, was given by Dr Haas, a German Scholar, in the three lectures he delivered at Geneva on “*What is European Civilization?*” He said, “The first stage of European Civilization was set by Ancient Greece where ‘the aim was to develop man harmoniously’. The supreme measure was a beautiful body. It clearly emphasizes the senses. The physical education, games, dancing, even mental education, poetry, music drama, philosophy and natural sciences were kept in proportion to develop the mind but not at the expense of the body. Its religion had no spirituality, no theology and no mysticism etc”.³

Ali Miyan pointed out, “The Greek spirit was rationalistic and electric. The Egyptian spirit was mystical and devotional. It was observed that, the Egyptian deities were chiefly honoured by lamentations and the Greek deities by dances”.⁴

The basic structure of the theological metaphysics of the Greeks was such that it left very little room for the development of the spirit of religious reverence and awe. Thus The Greek Civilization was agnostic. They did not strictly deny the existence of God but they had no place for Him in their practical life.⁵

In the Book “*Maza Khasir al-Aalam bil inhitatil Muslimeen*”(Islam and the World), Ali Miyan presents his opinion on the mishandling of scientific inventions. He holds, scientific inventions are in themselves neither good nor bad. They rendered good or bad by the use, which we have for them. Material well-being, power and prestige have to be the most acceptable thing in the West. All the assets of mind and matter aimed persistently towards discovering means and contrivance, which can safeguard the realization of these objectives with utmost ease and speed. Gradually, the means turned into the objectives.⁶

Ali Miyan demonstrates, Europeans have developed a strong urge for machines and in thousand ways delegated them to the very function of living. Before half a century ago, comfort regarded by them, as the aim of the life. Then, due to various reasons, the emphasis shifted to speed and now everyone is in pursuit of it. Westerners talked of progress because with the aid of a few scientific discoveries, they have succeeded in establishing a society, which progresses for comforts only. *Indeed, it might be true to say that, the ability to change the position of his body on the surface of the earth with ever-increasing speed is probably the most concrete conception of Utopia in the mind of the contemporary young person. Speed, definitely, is his peculiar God, and upon its altar, peace,*

*comfort, security and consideration for other persons are heartlessly sacrificed.*⁷

Ali Miyan judge the moral declining of the West appropriately he emphasized, the coupling of moral and religious depravity with a phenomenal progress in the scientific and industrial fields led to the creation of a striking disparity between power and ethics. Men learnt to fly in the air like birds and to swim in the water like fish, but they forgot how to walk straight on the earth. Undisciplined knowledge and unenlightened wisdom furnished every highwayman with a sword. Deadly weapons were placed in untrained hands, which repeatedly plunged the world into horrible blood baths. Now Science has given the atomic and Hydrogen bombs to humankind as a weapon for suicide. Have the contemporary achievements of science brought man near to fulfillment of the purposes and end of his life? Does modern man, with all his power over nature, find himself in a happier position than with those who lived earlier? We enabled to travel very fast from place to place, but places to which we travel are diminishing the worth to travel. Distances destroyed and nations brought to one another's doorsteps, with the result that international relations are getting worse, and the strains and stresses engendered by these new facilities for knowing our neighbors engulf our world in war. The

invention of broadcasting enabled us to speak to neighboring nations, with the result that, each nation exhausts its resources for irritating its neighbors. By attempting to convince others, of the superiority of its form of government.⁸ All of today's inventions; the aircrafts humming in the sky, the knowledge of mathematics, dynamics, mechanics, familiarity with electricity and internal combustion, ingenuity in the application of knowledge, the skill in the working of woods and metals, suggest that their inventors were supermen.⁹ Now consider the purposes for which the modern aircrafts has been, and then notice how increasingly they are used to drop bombs to shatter, choke, burn and dismember, defenseless people. These, are the purposes of either idiots or devils".¹⁰

Hence it should be noted that the Islamic attitude is different with regard to modern technological development, it doesn't deny totally the use of new sciences and technologies, but rather credits it as a blessing and mercy from Allah. In the words of Maulana Ali Miyan, "We believe that the real purpose of science is to remove hindrances in the way of true development of man's personality by harnessing the forces latent in nature in such a way so as to broaden life and make it rich in all its aspects".¹¹

Ali Miyan elaborates, in pre-historic time man travelled on foot. Then he learnt the use of the beasts of burden, later on he invented the cart. But man is a restless soul. He is never satisfied with his situation and is always striving to make himself more and more comfortable. As his needs multiplied, his standards of comfort and speed also changed. Better and quicker modes of transport were developed. The steamship has replaced the sailing vessel, and new marvels of speed and efficiency invented to travel both, by land and air. These inventions used as a means to make life good and comfortable, they are a blessing of Allah. The *Qur'an* has described it as a bounty from our Lord. The advantage man enjoys over other creatures in the matter of travel is a bounty from lord. The *Qur'an* affirms,

وَالْأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنَافِعُ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ

وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ

وَتَحْمِلُ أُنْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لِّم تَكُونُوا بِالْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا لِبَشِقَةِ الْإِنْفُسِ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ

لَرؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“And cattle He has created for you (men), from them ye derive warmth, and numerous benefits, and of their (meat) ye eat. And ye have a sense of beauty in them as ye drive them home in the evening, and as ye lead them forth to pasture in the morning. And they carry your heavy

loads to lands that ye could not (otherwise) reach except with souls distressed, for your Lord is indeed Most Kind Most Merciful. And (He has created) horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and use for show and he has created (other) things of which ye have no knowledge” (Qur’an 16:5-8).

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ۝

“We have honored the sons of Adam, and we have provided them with transport on land and sea, and we have given them for sustenance things good and pure, and we have conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation.” (Qur’an 17: 70).

وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ
لِيَسْتَوُوا عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا
سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ ۝

“And He it is that has created pairs in all things, and has made for you ships and cattle on which ye ride, in order that ye may sit firm on their backs, and when so seated, ye may celebrate the (Kind) Favour of your Lord, and say, “Glory to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves), and to our Lord, surely, must we turn back”. (Qur’an 43:12-13)

وَأَسْلِمَانِ الرِّيحِ غُدُوها شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُها شَهْرٌ ۝

“And to Solomon (We made) the wind (obedient), its early morning (stride) was month’s (journey) and its evening (stride) was a month’s (journey)”. (Qur’an 34:12)¹²

But there is a profound difference between the approach of a Believer and that of a non-Believer to these gifts bestowed by God. When a Believer avails them, he does it with a strong feeling of humility, because he knows in his heart, that it is only the Mercy of Allah that has enslaved the free, high-spirited animals and the inert steel and wood to his will, otherwise, he himself was helpless.¹³

Ali Miyan predicts the moral degradation of the West, he thought, in the West, today, ethical questions confined to the considerations of practical utility alone. It is just the other way round in Islam, where the real goal is the inner progress of man. Material utility came to dominate Western thought and morals in around the 17th century, when its social philosophers propagated the view that all those ethical principles which did not have a direct bearing on the material betterment of society did not deserve serious attention. Eventually this view gained a stronghold and commanded all fields of human activity. The virtues that had purely ethical values credited to a doubtful background of life, and condemned to a mere theoretical existence, left without the least power of influencing humanity.

In recent times, Western literature has exhibited a striking fondness for the word “*nature*”. But the context in which it is used, and the meanings that are sought to be conveyed through it show that it implies only animal nature. It stands for the world of flesh and shuts out the soul. Now, as the Western society becomes more and more hi-tech eventually, even the animal warmth, begun to fade from the nature of man and the individual is turning into a heap of unresponsive matter.¹⁴

Ali Miyan quotes Muhammad Asad, “The West, brings forth the new, utilitarian morality which daily grows more and more visible. All virtues, which have direct bearing upon the material welfare of the society. For example, technical efficiency, patriotism, nationalist group-sense etc, are being unduly exalted and sometimes absurdly exaggerated in their value, while virtues, which, have been, valued from a purely ethical point of view, for example, unselfish love or sexual fidelity, rapidly lose their importance because they do not confer a substantial benefit upon society. The age when the assertion on strong family bonds was decisive for the well-being of the group or the clan becoming rapidly outdated, in the modern West, by an age, of collective organization under far broader headings. In a society, which is essentially technological and is being organized at a rapidly increasing pace, on purely mechanical

lines, the behavior of a son towards his father is of no great social importance, so long as these individuals behave within the limits of general decency imposed by the society on the intercourse of its members. Consequently, the European father daily loses more and more authority over his son, and the son loses respect for his father. Their mutual relations get slowly overruled and for all practical purposes annihilated by the postulates of a mechanized society which has a tendency to abolish all privileges that could be exercised by one individual over another, and in the logical development of this idea also the privileges allowed by family relationship and therefore, the old relation between father and son or other such relations is becoming old-fashioned".¹⁵

Ali Miyan observed, when the spiritual vacuum created, Europe took a tragic turn. It descended by degrees into the depth of materialism. Its social thinkers and scientists proceeded to investigate the nature of the world and of life, as if there were no absolute power, which created them and ruled over them. They interpreted the material universe and its manifestations along mechanical lines and considered it as their "aim". They examine every object and concept through scientific methods, rejecting scornfully whatever based on Faith and morality. One by one they rejected everything, that existed apart from matter and energy, everything that was not realizable in experience or could

not be weighed and measured.¹⁶ For a long time the Europeans, did not openly reject the Faith, and all of them are not atheists even today, but the intellectual and moral position, they had adopted definitely reflect their preference for worldly comforts over the element of Faith. Attempts made after the Renaissance to produce reconciliation between Religion and Science, as some sort of religious arrangement always thought necessary, to preserve the tranquility of society by influencing social relations of men. But the pace set by materialistic civilization was so hot that religion could not stand it. It also entailed a good deal of inconvenience to keep materialism in harmony with transcendental truths. As decades and centuries passed, the ceremony waived off, and Europe took unconditionally to the worship of materialism. Significantly enough, there appeared a number of outstanding social and political writers and teachers, who indiscriminately sowed the seeds of materialism in the minds of people. Materialism had already paved the way for them by divorcing politics from ethics and prescribing a dual standard of morality, one private and the other public. If religion must exist, he taught, let it confined to the personal sector of life only. It has no business in politics. The State was a law unto itself. The subject matter of Christianity was the other world, it had nothing to do with the world man lived in. The State had no use for religious persons, for their religiousness often acted to its

detriment and prevented them from disregarding the postulates of morality in the hour of its need. Princes and officials of the State should cultivate the virtues of a fox and be ready to take recourse to deceit, falsehood and treachery in the pursuit of national objectives.¹⁷

Ali Miyan observed, “Western philosophers and writers devastated the standards and values of religion. They scoff at the age-old notions of religious morality and, after presenting sin in highly fascinating colours, invited people to give a free rein to their wills. Western Civilization had reverted to its origins. It became merely a new edition of the pagan civilizations of olden Greece and Rome. All the marks and traits of these ancient civilizations that had got subdued under the influence of Oriental Christianity revived by the cultural craftsmen of the 19th century. The same lack of spiritual feeling, the same inability to believe that characterized the religions of the Greeks and the Romans is apparent in the religious make-up of the modern West. The same extravagance of sensuality that once encountered in the cultures of Greece and Rome in olden days exhibited in full colours in the Western Civilization. The soul of the modern Western young man is not a bit different from the soul of the democratic young man of ancient Greece as portrayed by Plato in his Republic”.¹⁸

Impact of Materialism on the East

The Asiatic Nations, which are following in the footsteps of the European nations, are facing an even darker future. They lack the spiritual power, which alone can save humanity from the slavery of desire. The great teachings of the ancient Prophets (pbut) which once had cast their healthy and beneficial influence on the society of the East have become a spent force. The nations of East lack the sense of national solidarity and the consciousness of the citizenship possessed by the nations of the West, the result they cannot raise above petty selfish ends and are suffering from moral and social weakness of a destructive character, which is undermining their social fabric. In consequence, innumerable social and moral evils like bribery, corruption and partisanship come to the surface.¹⁹

Analyzing the situations of East and West Ali Miyan acknowledges, the West has all the resources in the world but it is devoid of a healthy sense of purpose whereas the East (Muslims) is endowed with the soundest of aims and ideals but very backward materially.²⁰ What may have been the reason, it is clear that the East, with its distinctive personality and its message, remained isolated from the West and vice-versa. Even when the two came together, it was in an atmosphere of suspicion and doubt, of bitterness and hatred”.²¹ The people all

over the world regards the East and the West as two hostile entities, which can never be reconciled. If they were to meet together, anywhere else it could be only on the battlefield and if they were to come together anywhere else, it would only be for mutual abuse. However the only way to alter the situation is that, the Muslims should make the fullest use of the physical sciences and technology of the West by learning them wholeheartedly and then subordinating them by means of their own intelligence and industry, for the lofty purposes which the last Prophet (pbuh) has bequeathed to them and by virtue which they have won the distinction of being proclaimed as the “Best of the people”.²²

Ali Miyan advised Muslims to carry out their duty in these words, “ The Muslims could discharge their sacred obligation only when they are able to produce in themselves that strength of Faith and courage of conviction skill and sincerity which can repulse the onslaught of imitative tendencies and glittering catch-words and overcome the petty considerations of immediate gain, both individual and collective. For this their leaders too, will have to make the necessary sacrifices, but even from the personal point of view these sacrifices will not be in vain”.²³

To Ali Miyan, the Western civilization is doomed. If it is still surviving it is not at all, due to any of its latent qualities but

because no other civilization is ready to take its place. The other civilizations in the world are, at the utmost, its own hazy carbon copies of third caricatures on they are so weak and frail that it is not easy for them to stand against it face to face. Now if a Muslim country or the world of Islam as a whole, can muster enough strength and competence to fill the void that is going to be created by the fall of the Western civilization, it can be re-establish its claim to the leadership of mankind. The Muslims therefore, have to decide whether it is more honourable to approach the West with a begging bowl or to assure the exalted position of the stewardship and guidance of humanity, than which there is no greater glory in the world after apostleship”.²⁴

Ali Miyan's missionary thought

Ali Miyan visited almost all famous countries of the West, particularly USA where he delivered many lectures and sermons. In these lectures, he addressed the public of the country and openly conveyed to them the message of Islam alongside warning them against the shortcomings of their civilization. Many of those lectures compiled in a book named as “*Nai dunya Amrica men saaf saaf baten*”.

Here we are presenting his missionary thought from his lectures delivered at the congregations held in different

universities of USA, like Harvard, Columbia and Detroit Universities etc.

To Ali Miyan, America is fortunate because Nature has been most generous to it. The Lord has bestowed His gifts lavishly upon this country. Its people are resourceful and enterprising. They are full of enthusiasm for living. They have been granted such a tenacity of purpose, resoluteness and pertinacity that they have made their country a paradise on earth. They have unraveled the mysteries of nature and harnessed its forces to their use. They have turned dust into gold. Now, in this land, wealth pours down from the sky, and rivers of milk and honey flow. This is the result of the galvanic spirit, robust imagination and unflagging eagerness of the American people. The United States not only abounds in mineral resources, but has, also, the hands to exploit them. In this respect, it is exceedingly fortunate and the whole world is, as if it were, keenly desirous to prove this. Everyone is a beggar at its door, eager to solicit its favors. By their ingenuity, sense of discipline and capacity for management, the people here have organized their life so well that the world at large is benefiting from this. In the material and economic fields, they are supreme. However, at the same time, this country is most unfortunate also. It has been a tragedy not only to America, but also to the entire humankind

that it has concentrated entirely on material progress and made the physical world the sole sphere of its activity. It would have been a different story if it received correct guidance, and the boon and blessing of true faith had reached it. If the intellectual faculties of the Americans had been directed altogether towards finding a clue to the mysteries of nature done and they cared to discover the secrets of the heart and the soul, they would have realized that the world of the heart was immeasurably more extensive than the world of matter, so much so that if the whole of the universe was dropped into the heart of man it would be lost like a pebble in an ocean. The people of America would then, have been able to appreciate correctly the place of man in the grand design of creation. Whichever field man chooses for him, Allah will grant him success in it. There is no limit to it, no thus far and no further. The consequences of the enterprise and industry of the West are apparent. The world has shrunk and man has subjugated it to meet his own ends and interests. Had the Westerners exerted themselves, in the same way, in the heart, soul, and belief, the world would have known the true station of humanity. When the West worked on a tree, it produced from it, a fruit no one could dream of identically, when it turned to Physics, Chemistry and Botany, it discovered new worlds. In the earlier days, people were not inclined to believe in the plurality of the worlds and those who made such a

claim, harshly punished by the Papal authority. However, today, a new world being discovered in almost everything. In the same way, had the West known the true station of humanity, and appreciated the distinction that Allah had conferred upon man, the history of our race would have been different.²⁵ The Western Civilization has reached the highest point of its development. No one knows the mysteries of the universe save Allah, nor can anyone exactly guess, what lies for us in store of tomorrow. But, as the case is at present, this Civilization has brought forth the best fruits it was capable of bearing. Now, we are standing at the crossroads of history. The Western Civilization has almost completed its action, and America, which is a major centre of it, is lapping up cheerfully the surge of its attainments. It can proudly claim to have lifted every veil from the face of Nature and unfolded all its secrets and all the facilities capable of being thought. Nevertheless, the heart of man is devoid of peace. His soul is unhappy. He has reached a stage where life seems meaningless. He is at present, dazed and bewildered. What needed now, to pull him out of the morass of frustration and disillusionment, give it a new message and breathe a new life into it. Life here is moving at a pace, that has left man breathless. The Modern civilization is taking him at break-neck speed, without knowing its results. Neither the reins are in his hands nor are his feet in the stirrups”.²⁶

Ali Miyan highly motivated the Muslim students and migrants to USA, to pursue missionary work to the West. He advised them to use their education and skills for this prestigious task. He inspires, “you are here in large numbers. There are not merely manual workers among you, but some highly gifted Muslims as well who are studying in the universities, and engaged in valuable scientific investigation. Many of you have made your mark as scholars and researchers. What is more, Islam is spreading in America. It has made a dent. A number of Americans have either embraced Islam or are ready to do so. Our Black Muslim brethren are a source of strength to us. This country, in brief, seems to be taking a new turn and a new ray of hope is appearing. Due to our shortsightedness and internal conflict, we in the past, lost the opportunity to come to its aid. Had Islam been propagated in Europe when the Ottomans had established their rule over a part of the Continent, or, even earlier, when the Moors had swept over Spain, the West, today, would not be finding itself in this position? It would not have been caught in the swamp of materialism. But, unfortunately, we did not rise for its help in the hour of need. The Muslim sailors had reached here, when they had set out into the world in the early centuries of Islam. It is said that the Muslims had discovered America before Columbus. How wonderful it would have been, had they taken advantage of it and given the message

of Islam to the New World. But it was not to be, and the Islamic countries have been paying the penalty for the last two hundred years. I believe that the way the Muslim countries have today, become the prey of the West and, the treatment they are receiving at its hands, is a punishment for the failure of the Muslims to convey, to it, the Message of Allah at the proper time. Now, circumstances are taking a favorable course. Muslims are migrating to America, in a steady stream, from different lands and for different reasons. There is no Islamic country whose finest young men are not found here. Lastly, a large number of enterprising people are coming to it from the country where the House of Kaba is situated. You should now realize your responsibility does not lie merely in acquiring higher education or solving your economic problems. You are not here only to earn and take back the money to your native lands and provide for your families. You should know that, it is your duty to give this country what it lacks. If you look at its material attainments and scientific advancements, then it presents a true picture of the greatness of man, but if you think about its moral bankruptcy and degradation of its soul, you will find it, at the lowest level. Intellectual maturity and criminal mentality exist side by side in America. On the one hand, the Americans are going to the moon, and, on the other, they are sinking into the lowest depths of moral degradation. The country that has done

so much is now finding itself helpless in providing a solution to the moral crisis of its youth. I say it without hesitation that there is no Muslim country, which can look at the Westerners in the face, and say 'see, it is here that you stumbled. With us is the solution of your problems and the ointment for your inner wounds. *"It is the Qur'an and the teachings of our Prophet (pbuh)"*. The bitter truth is that we have made ourselves unworthy of speaking to the West like men. We carry a heavy load of gratitude on our heads, and immersed from head to foot in its favour. Our ignorance deposes against us. Our poverty shouts from the housetops. Our arm always stretched out for alms. Such being the case, how can an Islamic country speak, like an equal, to the West, which has the whip hand and enjoys every kind of superiority intellectual, political and economic? Which Muslim country is there, that can express the mildest criticism of the West or offer a suggestion".²⁷

The message of Ali Miyan to Americans

Ali Miyan conveyed the message of Islam to Americans. He exposes, "Oh, citizens of the United States! My best wishes to you. I do not grudge against you and your attainments. I do not look at your progress with contempt. What I ask you most earnestly is only to add *Masha Allah, wa laa quwati illa-billaah*²⁸ to what you have. Subordinate your worldly possessions and

phenomenal achievements to the will of Allah. Place it all under the control and authority of the Divine Law. Use it for the rebirth and redemption of humankind and to generate an atmosphere of equality, fraternity, justice and freedom from fear in the world. Let there be no distinctions of race, color or wealth between man and man. Use your enormous resources for reconstruction of the world. You will thus, be helping yourselves as well for, without it, your civilization cannot survive. Its days are numbered”.²⁹

Ali Miyan’s works on the West

1. Between East and West

“*Between East and West*” is a lecture, which delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi at the University of London Union in October 1963. It can be identified as an analysis of the shortcomings of the East and the West, as well as a call to unite the Eastern Faith with Western Sciences.

Ali Miyan elaborates, the West has confined its activity and devoted all its intelligence and will power, to the external world, also it has concentrated all its efforts on the outer world, withdrawing its attention from man himself, who is the very soul of the universe, and a masterpiece creation. Even when it paid any attention to man’s inner self, its approach was tainted by

crass materialism, which makes it possible to plumb the depth of man's inner reality, to come to grips with the very solid fact of the inner life, and appreciate faith and belief and morality. Unfortunately, even if the West wants to profit from the heart and guide humanity by it, it will not be capable of doing so, for it has lost the key, to open this lock. However impressive the industries of the West may be, however fine their products, and however the genius of the people of the West, they are incapable of opening or breaking the lock, for it is not the lock of banks and factories, it is the human lock, and the only key that can be applied to it is "Faith". This key of "Faith" which obtained by humanity from the Prophets (pbut), has been lost or lies buried amidst the heavy burdens of Modern civilization or lost in the shambles of old religious centers. The affliction of humanity lies in the separation of the West from the East, the separation of knowledge and Faith, a separation that has led to great disasters in the past. Faith has been making its strides and growing for long ages in the East, while in the more recent centuries knowledge has been making strides and growing in the West. In addition, Faith continues to wait for the championship of Science, while science stands waiting to submit itself to guidance of Faith. Humanity meanwhile is waiting for the two to come together and co-operate with each other in order to produce a new

generation. There can be no hope of peace or true happiness without this blessed cooperation between Faith and Science.

2. **Naya Tufan aur uska Mukabla (A new menace and its answer)**

In this short treatise, Maulana Ali Miyan has analyzed the present situation of Muslim *Ummah*. According to Maulana Ali Miyan, the Muslim *Ummah* is facing the greatest danger it ever faced previously. This is "*Irreligiousness*". Ali Miyan Divulges, a wave is sweeping across the Muslim world and carrying away with it the glorious heritage of Islam. Never has Islam experienced a danger so powerful as prevailing. And the tragedy is that there are only a few who are willing to take stock of this dismal situation and fewer still, to place all that have at stake to combat it. The real problem of Islam now is not that of moral degradation or slackness in matters of prayer etc, but the real issue is "*belief and unbelief*". It is that wither Islam will survive or be cast away like an old garment. The battle being fought today in the Muslim world is between Western Materialism and Islam. On one side, there is agnosticism, and on the other side is Divine law. I believe that this is the last struggle between religion and irreligiousness, after which the world will swing full-scale towards either one side or the other.

The cure of the ill Muslim world lies in our capacity to produce a band of dedicated workers who will keep religion above all personal considerations and will have no worldly aspirations for themselves. Their entire endeavor should be directed towards loosening the intellectual and psychological knots of the ruling classes, establishing personal contacts with them and bringing forth for them an effective religious literature and influencing them through their own piety, sanctity of character, earnestness of purpose, sincerity and selflessness and a moral conduct like that of the Prophet(pbuh).

3. Islamiyat aur Maghribi Mustashriqeen aur Musalman Musannifeen (Islamic studies, orientalists and Muslim Scholars)

This book is a long essay on orientalists and their intellectual activities. The paper was read in an International Seminar entitled as “Islam and orientalists” organized by Darul Musannifin, Azamgarh on Februry 21-23, 1983. It is an analytical work on the intellectual contributions of orientalists to Islam. Very open heartedly Maulana Ali Miyan appreciates the intellectual efforts of some famous orientalists. To Ali Miyan, It is a moral duty of every Muslim Scholar to acknowledge the services rendered by the orientalists to the Islamic branches of learning. Several among them have employed themselves to the

study of Islamic Sciences, not with any political, economic or missionary motives but for the satisfaction of their scholarly passion with devotion and diligence, it would be sheer injustice, if one were to deny the fact that numerous valuable manuscripts, historical documents and source materials on important topics have seen the light of the day through their efforts and that they have contributed to further studies and researches in Islamics. Had these manuscripts been left to the care of their owners they would have in all probability been destroyed. But simultaneously he condemns those orientalists who try to destroy the real figure of Islam. Their only purpose to study Islam was to point out objectionable concepts and to criticize it on intellectual grounds as well as to misguide Non-Muslims particularly the West, against Islam and to widen the differences between Islam and the West. These orientalists are actually the agent of Imperial powers and serving for the false interests of Imperialism. To quote him, "I do not consider it improper to invite attention towards the prevailing penchant a majority of this class which exhibits a censorious attitude towards Islam, and always tries to bring out something to take a rap at the *Shariah*, History and Culture of Muslims. These scholars make mountains out of molehills with a view to serving certain political or religious ends. Their attitude in this regard is not different from the drains inspector of a local body who can see only sewers, drains and

heaps of rubbish in a nice and beautiful laid out town. There works too do not differ from the reports of officials charged to bring out deficiencies in any system. There only target to study Islam is to highlight dark features and misguide to common people”.³⁰

To him, very often they enumerates the merits of a respected luminary of Islam, held dear by the Muslims but also input some moral failings to him which can condemn him in the eyes of the readers. Their writings give the impression that, the time in which that call of Islam was given, was ripe for a revolution of that kind and the only contribution of the great personage was to make a correct assessment of the then situation and pull the strings of a drama already set for the occasion. Such misinterpretations camouflaged by coloring the events in a careful and cautious manner, that the reader never given a cause of alarm and continues to take the writer as an honest scholar trying to make an objective analysis of the events and circumstances. The writings of such orientalist are much more harmful than those who openly attack Islam through perversion of distortion of facts. Therefore, there is need for Muslim Scholars, that they should headed and pursue the academic efforts equivalent to these orientalist as well as to present the true figure of Islam in front of the West, so that they realize the

advantage of Islam. It is necessary that the Muslim Scholars should produce original works on different topics in keeping with norms of modern scholarship to counteract the negative influences exerted by the orientalists as well as to provide the Muslim World with correct, authentic and dependable facts and concepts relating to Islam. These works have to excel the creations of orientalists in literary presentations, scholarship, method of investigation, persuasive reasoning, and depth of knowledge and breath of vision and to expose the fallacies and mistakes, so commonly found in the works of orientalists. It is also necessary that the works of the orientalists should thoroughly survey and critically analyzed in the light of Islamic sources. The sources used by them should critically examined and mistakes committed in the rendering of Arabic text into European languages should be brought to light so that the wrong conclusions and erroneous theories based on illogical and doubtful premises may be demolished. It would also be necessary to highlight the underlying political and missionary motives underlying the facade of scholarly endeavors implicit in most of the works of orientalists.

In later pages Ali Miyan discuss in detail the literary and intellectual effort made by great Muslim Scholars in different Islamic countries.

Critical remarks

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi sincerely observed and deeply studied the Western Civilization. However, he did not criticize it blindly like other Islamic scholars. He analyzed its merits and demerits, impartially, as well as very kindly, he appreciated its merits, but on the other hand, he condemned its evils and wrong approaches according to the rule of “*adopt the merits and give up the demerits*”. He pointed out its positive approaches and advised people to follow them, he even gave evidences in their favour from Islamic sources. According to him, the most dreadful evil of the West is their extreme dependence on “*Materialism*” and denying “*Spirituality*”. While the most important shortcoming of eastern thought, is its extreme dependency of Faith and Spirituality, and ignoring worldly matters. Both have opposite thoughts and extreme approaches.³¹

In the words of Ali Miyan, “The outlook in the East being basically spiritualistic, there have been cases here of mystics raisings the cry of *nothing exists but Allah* in the stage of ecstasy. The spirit of the West is dominating by materialism. When, therefore, its thinkers are in an exalted state of feeling, they reject everything that does not have a direct bearing upon economic materialism and cry out “*nothing exists but sex and hunger*”.³²

Ali Miyan further says, “The Sufi saints of the East regard man as the ‘Shadow of Allah upon earth’. Overwhelmed by this notion, some of them let to declare, “I am Allah”.³³ The materialists of the West do not credit man with anything higher than an animal existence. Hence they shout “*I am a beast*” are being heard on all sides today”.³⁴

Ali Miyan assumes that, materialism claims that life is not more than what it explains and only that is to be believed which is tangible and capable of being comprehended by human perception, which is perceptible is real and the rest is non-existent, visionary and baseless. Man is the rightful owner and master of this world. Materialism elevates man to the position of lawgiver, claims perfection or human knowledge and assumes that nothing in this vast and complex universe is beyond human comprehension.³⁵

He also termed the materialism as “*Modern Irreligiousness*”.³⁶ Materialism elevates natural resources, technological contrivances and professional expertise to the level of Allah. Man has today pinned his hope in material objects and thrown himself on the mercy of specialists and experts. For success and failure, prosperity and adversity, honour and infamy, life and death of nations have now been committed to the case of one expert or the other. The arrogant spirit of extreme phenominalism, the

reverence for materialism and physical forces, and the overwhelming confidence in experts, scientists and technologists are the new forms of irreligiousness, invested with a halo, which makes them partners of Allah. These are suppose to be sharers of Divinity, the new Gods of modern age.³⁷

Chapter: 7

Notes and References:

1. <http://darulislam.info/forum/showthread.php?t=3041>.
See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam and the World*, op.cit,
p. 114
2. Ibid., pp. 116-17.
3. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam and the World*, Lucknow,
Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1981, pp.
114-15.
4. Ibid., p. 132. See also, <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
5. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Lisaani wa Tehzeebi jahiliyat ka Alamiya*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1981, p. 48.
6. Ibid., pp. 87-88.
7. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Maghrib se kuch saaf saaf baten*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1973, pp. 16-17.

8. <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam and the World*, op.cit, pp. 181-82.
9. Ibid., p. 184. See also, <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
10. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nai Dunya Amrica me saf saf Baten*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2002, p. 46-47.
11. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Mazhab ya Tehzeeb*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1970, p. 38.
12. Ibid., pp. 41-42. See also, <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>
13. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nai dunya Amrica men saaf saaf baten*, op.cit, p. 126.
14. Ibid., pp.131-32.
15. Ibid., pp. 134.
16. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Naya tufan aur uska Muqabla*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1998, pp. 43-44.

17. <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>, Ibid., pp. 53-54.
18. Ibid., p. 58.
19. <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>. See also, Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam ek Taghyyur pazeer dunya men*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2001, pp. 66-67.
20. Ibid., p. 89.
21. Ibid., p. 113.
22. Hasani Bilal Abdul Hai, *Hazrat Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Dawat-o-Fikr kay aham Pehlu*, Raibareilly, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, 2007, pp. 72-73. See also, <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
23. Ibid., P. 84.
24. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Asr-e-hazir men Deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1983, pp. 19-20.

25. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Maghrib se kutch saf saf baten*, op.cit, pp. 73-74. See also, <http://darulislam.info/forum/showthread.php?t=3041>
26. <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>, Ibid., p. 92.
27. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nai dunya Amrica men saaf saaf baten*, op.cit, p. 39-40. See also, <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
28. *Masha Allah, wa laa quwati illa-billaah* means what Allah desires there is no power accept Allah. It is a Qur'anic phrase used to appreciate something.
29. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nai dunya Amrica men saaf saaf baten*, op.cit, pp. 57-58. See also, <http://muslim-canada.org/islamonlyway.html>
30. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islamiyaat aur Maghribi mustashriqeen wa musalman Musannifin*, p. 4-5.
31. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Mazhab ya Tehzeeb*, op.cit, p. 22.
32. Ibid, pp. 24-25.

33. A Sufi of Basra known as Mansoor Al-Hallaj proclaim himself as “Ana-al-Haq”(I am Allah). The authorities gave him the death penalty.
34. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam and the World*, op.cit, pp. 137-38. See also: <http://muhammad.net/our-world-today-mainmenu-50/236-islam-and-civilization-by-nadwi.html>
35. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Morka-e-Imaan-o-Maddiyat*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2004, pp. 81-82.
36. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Naya tufan aur uska Muqabla*, op.cit, pp. 43-44.
37. Ibid., p. 72.

CHAPTER 8

RELIGIO-POLITICAL THOUGHT OF MAULANA ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI

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Background

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was an eminent Islamic scholar, socio-religious reformer and a political thinker. He spent his entire life for the cause of Islam. For this purpose, he toured almost all the important cities of India and visited a number of foreign countries as well. His Islamic ideas were very much clear and he invited the West to adopt the teachings of Islam. Ali Miyan believed, Islam to be the only solution to the crisis of the present world.¹ The West has made tremendous progress in the fields of Science and Technology. Everybody welcomes scientific development but the misuse of it is very dangerous and is a great threat to our civilization. Most of the Americans are materialistic. Though they are *Ahl-e-Kitab*, yet they have little faith on their own revealed books. Due to ego problem, they do not accept Islam, though it is known to them that, Islam is the final form of religion. They also know that there is a need for the faith, to provide a bright future to humanity and this can alter the prevailing situation. For this purpose, Non-Muslims should embrace Islam. Islam is the complete code of life

and is the most appropriate religion in all dimensions. According to the Holy *Qur'an*, Islam is the final form of religion for the entire Humankind. In addition, Ali Miyan addressed the whole *Ummah*, particularly the Muslim elite and Arabs with these words, “We should feel the pain of humanity. We can only cure it through the teachings of the Messengers (pbut). Because the way, that was adopted by Messengers (pbut) is the best one”.² In every speech and congregation, Ali Miyan demonstrated, the way adopted by Messengers (pbut) in different ages for the reformation of society. It was their divine duty to take on their responsibilities and convey the message of Islam to humankind.³ Ali Miyan had tried his best to convince non-Muslims that they were in the wrong path, and if they did not accept the true message of Allah then, they would have to face its consequences on the Day of Resurrection. If they accept Islam, they would enjoy everlasting peace in Paradise. Ali Miyan also advised the Muslims to behave well with their non-Muslim brethren, so that they may put their faith on them.

Ali Miyan yearns to remind the entire humanity, the status and responsibilities of a man. According to him, humankind may be divided into many communities, like religious, national, and tribal, but the most durable relation between human beings is that of “*humanity*”. All the Prophets (pbut), Sufi saints, and

religious reformers adopted this method of reforming the society.⁴

The Messengers and Prophets (pbut) tried to reform the moral conditions of human beings, and did not make effort to develop materialistic resources. They preached that, *there is a Lord (Allah) who is the Creator, Sustainer and Supervisor of the world.* To admit the autonomy and worthiness of Allah, is known as “*Iman*”. All messengers (pbut) conveyed that, “there is none to worship except Allah”. This is the base of Religion. There is only one way to salvation of Mankind, and that is following the true spirit of Religion.⁵

However, Ali Miyan’s exposition of Religion (Islam) was marked by moderation. He was not a fanatic in any sense of the term and believed in Islam as a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor in human history. To him, Islam is a civilizational force, which has retained its relevance even in the modern age, and is a viable counterpart to the Western civilization with all its excuses.⁶

Ali Miyan believes that “Faith” which is absolute, stands in no need of Renaissance. On the contrary, there is a need to harmonize and customize modern technology and infrastructure according to the faith of Islam.⁷

At a very young age, he began to convey the divine message of Islam among the Indian Non-Muslim masses. His greatest anxiety was to protect every human being from the eternal loss, that is life hereafter and from the fire of hell.

For this very purpose, he met Dr. Ambedkar and conveyed to him this divine message. At that time, Maulana Ali Miyan was merely a youth of only 22. He did not succeed, yet he continued this divine mission throughout his life. Realizing that the Muslims are facing numerous problems and it requires a political solution, Ali Miyan forced himself, against his will, to enter politics. However, he was a stranger to the world of politics. A sudden burst in violent attacks against Muslims instigated by Hindus, in which, scores of Muslims lost their lives, as well as the continuing discrimination of the government to Muslims, forced him to turn his attention to politics from 1964 onwards. At a time when the role of the state had extended into almost every sphere of personal and collective life, he wrote, "The Muslims could not afford to remain aloof from politics. To do so would be tantamount to collective suicide, for they would not be able to protect their identity, their personal laws, their religious traditions, and even their lives, in the face of the growing threat of Hindu aggression as well as the Hinduisation of the state".⁸ Therefore, in 1964 Ali Miyan, along with other leading Muslim

social, political and religious figures, set up the All-India Muslim Majlis-i Mushawarat (The Muslim Consultative Assembly), an umbrella body of several Muslim organizations, to chalk out a co-ordinate political strategy for the Muslim community. Ali Miyan saw the Majlis, as playing a central role in politically awakening, mobilizing and uniting Muslim voters scattered all over the country in order to make them a powerful, consolidated political force. The Majlis intended to hold dialogue with established political parties in order to convince them of the need to pay attention to the problems and concerns of the Muslims, as well as to promote inter-communal amity in the country, which Ali Miyan believed, as indispensable for Muslims as well as others to prosper. It actively promoted communal harmony while at the same time promoting Muslim rights and interests. Seeking to politically integrate the Muslims into the mainstream of social and political life in India, the Majlis, was also intended to enable Muslims to prove to others their *Qur'anic* status of *Khair-al-Ummah* (the best community).⁹ All this was possible only in a climate of peace. Ali Miyan states, "The setting up of the Majlis was a sign that the Muslims were no longer willing to be treated as a passive vote-bank. Angered at the Government's lack of attention to Muslim problems, particularly to the growing wave of attacks on Muslims and the woeful economic conditions of Muslims, the Majlis leaders argued the need for Muslims to enter

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into alliances with other political parties, to bargain with them, promising Muslim votes in return for assurances of protection of Muslim interests".¹⁰ Ali Miyan observed that, the Muslims did not write a proclamation of slavery for any party, arguing that the Congress could no longer take the Muslims vote as for granted. Muslims, acting within the framework of the Indian Constitution, would support political forces that could guarantee protection of their lives, property and religious freedom".¹¹ Contrary to Ali Miyan's expectations, the Majlis died a premature death not long after it was established.¹² After many experiments, Ali Miyan concluded that as a minority and an increasingly threatened one, Muslims needed to work along with existing political parties, rather than set up one of their own. The legacy of the Muslim League and its involvement in the partition of India left behind too many scars to allow Ali Miyan to contemplate the possibility of a separate Muslim party. This did not mean, Ali Miyan insisted, that Muslims should not organize their own separate party and on this basis seek to have a dialogue with other political forces to protect and promote their own interests. In fact, Ali Miyan believed that, if Muslims attempt to make a separate party of their own, it would tantamount to unite Hindu voters against Muslims.

In addition to the Majlis, Ali Miyan played a leading role in the establishment of the *Muslim Personal Law Board* (MPLB) and the *Babri Masjid Action Committee* (BMAC). The Muslim Personal Law Board (MPLB) was set up in 1972, and Ali Miyan headed it from 1983 until his death in 1999. Its primary purpose was to protect Muslim Personal Laws from interference by the state and Hindu chauvinist forces as well as to combat what were seen as un-Islamic practices among the Muslims, exhorting them to abide by the rulings of the *Shariah* in their personal lives. It played a central role in mobilizing Muslim opinion against the 1984 verdict of the Supreme Court of India in the well-publicized Shah Bano case, by organizing mass rallies and meeting with political leaders, including the then Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, urging them to ensure that Muslim Personal Law will not be interfered by Government. In a country where the *Shariah* was applicable only to the realm of personal affairs, specifically in matters of endowments, marriage, divorce and inheritance, Ali Miyan saw the threat of tampering of Muslim Personal Law by the state, under pressure from both secularists as well as Hindu chauvinists, and as tantamount to a conspiracy against Islam as such. Thus, he asserted, “We cannot ever allow anyone to impose on us any other social and cultural system and personal law. We presume this as *Dawat-i-Irtidad* (invitation to apostasy), and so we must oppose it as we would oppose any

invitation to renouncing our faith. This is our constitutional right as citizens of this country, and the Indian Constitution not only allows this but positively supports us in our quest for the preservation of our democratic rights and freedoms”.¹³ Although Ali Miyan envisioned the *Shariah* as all-encompassing, extending even to collective affairs, by accepting its jurisdiction being restricted to personal affairs as the basic minimum acceptable to Muslims, he saw the possibility of the Indian Muslims coming to terms, at least for the present and the immediate future, with what, in theory at least, was a secular polity. Ali Miyan saw secularism, understood both as state of neutrality towards all Faiths, as well as harmony among followers of different Faiths, as indispensable for a plural society like India, and especially for protecting Muslim interests. Even at the height of the *Babri* mosque controversy, in the early 1990s, when Hindu zealots, targeting a mosque in the town of Ayodhya which, allegedly had been built on the ruins of a temple dedicated to the Rama, unleashed a wave of attacks against Muslims, Ali Miyan counseled dialogue and restraint, rather than retaliation and conflict. Warning Muslims not to take to the path of violence against the Hindu attacks, he sought to present a solution to the dispute, that would satisfy both sides. He met several Hindu religious leaders to help evolve a mutually acceptable solution, believing that the matter should not be left to professional

politicians who had their selfish interest in prolonging communal conflict. When Hindus began a mass, nation-wide campaign to destroy the mosque, promoting anti-Muslim emotions and violence, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing a public statement calling for peace and tolerance, pleading that the matter be resolved through constitutional means. At a peace rally in Lucknow in 1990, he said, “in the face of mounting Hindu militancy, Muslims must respond by turning to Allah, refraining from sin, inviting non-Muslims to Islam and adopting the path of steadfastness, tolerance and bravery”.¹⁴ In the wake of the destruction of the Babri mosque in December 1992, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing another appeal for calm. He called for the reconstruction of the mosque on its original site, a ban on all organizations preaching communal hatred, and a storm-like movement for promoting inter-communal harmony and patriotism. He bitterly criticized the action of some Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh who reacted to the destruction of the Babri mosque by attacking Hindu temples there.¹⁵ He condemned this as a negation of the teachings of Islam. Ali Miyan said, “Adding that, in the present situation, Muslims in these countries should protect their non-Muslim minorities and serve as a model for Hindus in India, to be emulated by their own minorities”.¹⁶ Appealing to Muslims not to lose heart in the face of mounting attacks from Hindu chauvinist groups and to desist from counter-violence, Ali Miyan

asserted that “the Muslims must respond by seeking to protect their separate communal identity and by engaging in Islamic missionary work, and, in this way, try to bring India to the right path”.¹⁷ In another place Ali Miyan said, “turn to Allah for help, repent for your sins, abide by the commandments of Allah and recite the *Qur’an* regularly particularly those verses that talk about peace, security, victory and Nusrat (divine assistance)”.¹⁸ Also, he pointed out that, Muslims must remember that, they are a minority, they should strive for peaceful coexistence with people of other faiths, and work with them for social justice. They must not despair in this hour of trial, but, instead, should steadfastly endure tribulations in the path of Allah, not hesitating even to sacrifice their lives as martyrs for their faith.

In the wake of mounting attacks against Muslims, instigated both by Hindu militants as well as by elements within the Government, in which large numbers of Muslims lost their lives, inter-religious dialogue assumed a particular urgency. While appreciating the work of the movement of “*Tableegi Jamat*” among the Muslim masses, he felt that it had tended to neglect the role of the Ulama in the affairs of the country as a whole. The Ulama, had a special role to play in promoting awareness among the Muslims of the changing social conditions in the country, in order to make them both ideal citizens as well as capable of

obtaining the leadership of the country. In the words of Ali Miyan, “If you make Muslims one hundred per cent mindful of their Nawafil (optional prayers) making them all very pious, but leave them cut off from the wider environment, ignorant of where the country is heading and of how hatred is being stirred up in the country against them, then, leave alone the optional prayers, it will soon become impossible for Muslims to say even their five daily prayers. If you make Muslims strangers in their own land, blind them to social realities and cause them to remain indifferent to the radical changes taking place in the country and the new laws that are being imposed and the new ideas that are ruling people’s hearts and minds, then let alone (acquiring) leadership (of the country), it will become difficult for Muslims to even ensure their own existence”.¹⁹ Therefore, Ali Miyan made efforts to reach out to non-Muslims, seeking establish better relations between both Muslims and Non-Muslims, this being seen as necessary for missionary work among them. Such efforts at interaction took various forms. Thus, for instance, Ali Miyan began taking an interest in the efforts of the Dalits in their struggles against caste oppression, having as early as in 1935 met with Dr. Ambedkar, the Dalit leader, inviting him to adopt Islam along with his followers. He established close ties with the Bangalore-based English fortnightly Dalit Voice, releasing its inaugural issue in 1980. Dalit Voice advocated an alliance

between all marginalized communities in India, including Dalits, Backward Castes, Tribals, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims, against upper caste Hindu oppression, and Ali Miyan was an enthusiastic supporter of the cause.²⁰ In order to reach out to well-meaning non-Muslims, as well as to highlight Muslim concerns and problems, Ali Miyan set up the English-weekly 'One Nation Chronicle' which failed to take off, however it was replaced by the fortnightly 'Nation and the World'. Both names were deliberately chosen to reflect an insistence that Muslims, too, considered themselves part of the Indian nation, and, therefore, could not afford to be ignored. Ali Miyan served as head of the trust under whose auspices the journal was published. Ali Miyan saw the journal promoted balance and goodwill between people of different communities. Ali Miyan called for an inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and others, particularly Hindus, envisaging this as going beyond mere theological exchange to take the form of joint efforts for building a more harmonious and liberal society.²¹ To Ali Miyan, for the people of different faiths to live together in peace and co-operation, it is necessary that they should understand each other's religion, culture and traditions. When two civilizations meet, there is always a two-way process of interaction between them, both being influenced and molded by each other. Such interaction must not be seen as negative; because human

existence is based on the noble principle of *give and take*.²² It was because of such exchanges in the past, numerous reformers, influenced by Islam, emerged among the Hindus, preaching the unity of Allah and the oneness of all humankind. On the other hand, because of being open to indigenous cultural influences the Muslims of India developed their own individual national character that sets them apart from Muslims elsewhere. Not all these influences may be healthy for instance, existence of caste system, social discrimination and extravagant customs and ceremonies among the Indian Muslims are examples of the baneful impact of their encounter with Hindu society. However, there were also positive features of the surrounding culture which were adopted, Indian Muslim culture had developed a beauty and richness which was characteristically its own. He said, “Muslims had actually benefitted immensely from the ancient cultural heritage of India. It enabled them, to successfully meet the onslaught of Western culture, while preserving their cultural heritage largely intact; in contrast to Muslims living in other Islamic countries”.²³

Further, he added, “the depth and profundity of Indian Muslim thought, particularly Sufi Thought, was a result of the interaction of Islam with social, cultural and intellectual processes native to India. This cultural dialogue had endowed the

Muslims with a rootedness in the Indian context so that they operate not like an alien or a traveler but as natural, permanent citizens who had built their homes in the light of these peculiar needs, circumstances, past traditions and new impulses”.²⁴ Ali Miyan insisted that it was thus utterly futile to expect Muslims to lead a life of complete immunity from local influences. While not advocating a form of inter-faith dialogue that might lead Muslims to compromise in any way on their faith, being convinced that Islam was indeed the only perfect religion, Ali Miyan advocated what could be called a dialogue of life, appealing for people of different religions to work together on common grounds. He saw the struggle against violence as the single most urgent need of the times, and here Muslims could work together with others to establish a more peaceful and just society. He often spoke against extremism of all sorts, insisting that, what was required was a band of missionaries who could douse the flames of hatred and enmity.²⁵ In this way, Ali Miyan taught the Indian Muslims how they could live in a religiously plural society in such a way that their beliefs could remain free from the stain of communal prejudices and conflict, while at the same time being in harmony by respecting each others religious beliefs.

He insisted that rather than being a barrier in the path of Islamic missionary work, Muslims should be facilitators. Due to these circumstances, which have been discussed earlier, Maulana Ali Miyan with some of his companions established a reformist movement in 1944. Which was later named as “*Payam-e-Insaniyat*” (Message of Humanity).²⁶ The very purpose of this movement was to bridge up the void among different faiths, to clarify the misunderstandings against Islam, to convey the revealed message to humanity with peace. Until day, this movement is working successfully. Here we present a passage of his speech in which Ali Miyan demonstrated the purpose of the Movement. “We think our message is essential for every party and our existence is necessary more than any other party. If we will succeed in our goal, the palace of Humanity will be able to be constructed. These days thorns are growing instead of flowers. Humanity has started diminishing. We ask to regain the elegance, to bleach humanity. Today bitter fruits and thorns are growing in the tree of humanity. We should grow sweet fruits on it. We do not want to create hurdles in your routine but we want to draw your attention towards the evils of the modern world. Please take care of humanity. May the anxiety of it emerge in anyone’s heart. This was the message of all Messengers (pbut). We are merely reminding you of it. Today some are confined only to thought, some are worried only for

food, cloth and shelter. But nobody is concerned over the wrong path on which humankind is today. The only solution is to follow the true spirit of Islam. Because, it is the way of all Prophets (pbut). Through the efforts of Messengers (pbut) only depressed people receive peace and worried people are satisfied”.²⁷

His missionary work in the West

We have already discussed that Maulana Ali Miyan visited a number of countries in the East and West. During his visit to USA, Britain, Germany and Spain, he preached Islam. He invited Non-Muslims to Islam and preached the doctrines of Islam. Many of his speeches published in different journals and books. We present his missionary thought from one of his speeches, which was delivered in the University of London Union.²⁸

He expressed, the message of Islam is an open invitation to the worship and surrender to Allah and belief in the apostleship of the Prophets (pbut), particularly that of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and in resurrection and final judgment. In return for submitting to this call, the world will emerge from the darkness of ignorance and the spirit of man will be set free. Man will rediscover his equilibrium and from the narrow confines of the world of matter, he will come out into a world, which, although enclosed within him, stretches beyond time and space. There

never was as strong requirement of this message as today. The civilization of ignorance has been publicly disgraced. Its shame is flagrantly exposed. People have become disgusted with life and are despaired of the intellectual and cultural leaders of the West. Modern civilization is seriously ill. The only cure to these present illnesses and ailments is that its leadership should pass from the hands that are coloured with the blood of humanity to those that were destined to guide humanity, i.e. from the hands of Britain, America and Russia into the hands of the true followers of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).²⁹ Ali Miyan continued, today, again it is necessary to *'deliver men from the oppression of other faiths to the equality and fairness of Islam'*. Even in the twentieth century there are faith abounding in superstitious beliefs and fanatic teachings that tyrannize their followers and drive them like deaf and dumb animals. In addition, there are new political and economic 'faiths' like *collectivism*, *nationalism* and *socialism* that are just a step ahead of the ancient pagan faiths. The two last World Wars were the gifts of these very dogmas.³⁰

In a very beautiful manner, he conveyed the message of Islam to the West. Ali Miyan said, "As for East, my friends of the West, its wealth does not consist of "oil", the black gold which you transport to your respective countries and then use it to run airplanes and automobiles. The real wealth of the East is

its "Faith" which sprang up and blossomed there. You already benefited to some extent from this wealth at the beginning of your Christian era. Then again, in the opening decades of the seventh century, the same treasure of wealth opened again, in the forlorn desert of Arabia, and burst forth with a force and speed. Springing up from a remote valley in Makkah, it reached in no time the farthest ends of the known World. Showering its blessings everywhere and refreshing, revitalizing and enriching each and every nook and corner of the world, so much so that the entire earth blossomed forth with a whole new revolution. It is still capable of overcoming all the problems confronting our modern civilization, and it can inject fresh vigor and vitality into our present civilization, giving it a new lease of life by providing it with a fresh sense of purpose and renewing its message, and reorienting the instruments and institutions of science and technology to worthwhile purpose. This can have momentous results and to the creation of a new society in the best interests of humankind, the society for which the present age is yearning upon, you who belong to this great country lies a great responsibility, because you were the pioneers of modern civilization". The *Qur'an* addresses us by saying, "*There hath come to you from Allah a new light and perspicuous book wherewith Allah guideth all who seek his pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and drag*

them out of darkness, by his will, into the light, and guidth them to a path that is right”(al-Maida 15, 16).³¹

Islam: an outstanding Religion

To quote Ali Miyan, “It is an incontrovertible fact that the ancient faiths which have come to the aid of mankind and furnished it with right guidance at the hour of need and whose glorious contribution to human upliftment is unforgettable have lost their vitality owing to the vicissitudes of time. They are a spent force today and cannot be depended upon to repel the onslaught of *materialism* in the modern age. Even the upholders of these faiths have lost faith in them. They are not suited to exigencies of the present days and religious fervor, and the spirit of endeavor is lacking in them. They are as powerless as a paralyzed limb, as far as meeting, the menace of the modern civilization is concerned. Most of the cultures have already laid down their arms before the Western civilization and accepted that, there is no escape from materialism, which is the last stage in the evolution of human civilization. But at this critical juncture there is a religion which is safe and unpolluted, and is both living and life giving, true and realistic, pure and free from all faults and weaknesses. Its followers know that they are responsible for the superintendence of the world. They will have to render

account of the way they discharge their duty. This faith is distinguished from other faiths in four respects.

- 1) *Qur'an*: It possesses a great Book, which vibrates with life and is affluent with human felicity. It provides a sound guidance to humankind and contains knowledge, which is both profound and unbounded. For mind and intellect, it is an everlasting source of joy and hopefulness, a springhead that never dries up. Its ever flowing strait does not get isolated from life. It has wrought a mighty revolution in the lives of men and can do it again any day. It can once more infuse a new life into leadership and cause a tumult in its waves.

- 2) *Hadith*: The second is the record, sayings, and doings of the sacred Prophet (pbuh) and his life-account. It is a fragrant legacy, which is extremely beautiful as well as incandescent. It is the most shining page in the story of human advancement, which can be recreated by reminding humankind of its true station. Its reading restores the confidence of man in himself and revives in him the awareness of his nobility. Man will then be seized with the ambition to attain heights by emulating the Prophet's example, and may lead his life with sublimity, peace and magnanimity. It unties the knots of intellect and unravels the hidden mysteries. This wonderful portrait of lofty virtues and splendid accomplishments is present to this day in its pristine

glory and the alteration of circumstances and the passage of time have done nothing to rob it of its purity and radiance.

- 3) *Islamic Shariah*: The preserved treasure of the *Islamic Shariah* which is present, without any distortion or amendment, as it was left behind by the bringer of the *Shariah* (the Prophet (pbuh)). The *Shariah* is the perfect Jurisprudential System in the world. It denotes and admirable blending of the ancient with the modern and can serve the needs of all ages and times. It is also well established for the future. It possesses such wise and sound foundations that the edifice of a healthy society and civilization, can always be built on them.
- 4) *Enthusiastic adherents*: The adherents of Islam, characterized by religious fervor and enthusiasm, which no other community can boast of. In spite of all their lethargy, listlessness and neglect of Faith, the spark of Islam is still hidden in their hearts. They are ready to the call of an earnest preacher, even to make the supreme sacrifice in the path of Allah. This is the charming aspect of belief and vitality of which, the Western nations are devoid, today.³²

Simultaneously, Ali Miyan asked the Muslim *Ummah* to perform its duty faithfully. Muslims are the custodians of the true faith in which the success of the entire humanity is encompassed.

It is the responsibility of Muslims to inform the whole world about divine faith and its importance. The whole *Ummah* and particularly the Arabs are guilty of hiding the true message, and they will be liable for this on the Day of Judgment.³³

Ali Miyan motivated Muslim youths with respect and appreciation in the hope that they will be potential *Duat* (missionaries). He asserted that, their studies in Western institutions should empower them to maintain a viable Islamic presence. The desire of education in the West has enfeebled them to utilize the immense potential within them. By truly practicing their faith, they can touch the hearts of people in their respective countries.

Ali Miyan rightly remarked, “How unfortunate it is, that the people living in these Muslim nations are still zealous believers, and can produce Muhammad bin Qasim, Tariq ibn Ziyad, Musa bin Nusair and Muhammad the Conqueror. In addition, the leaders presiding over their destinies have lost their faith in Islam. They have given it up as a lost case; they have abandoned all hopes in its future and have not the least interest in it! Muslim Youths should have gone to Europe to learn arts and sciences and even to master technology and industry of the West to put these assets to the service of Islam”.³⁴

Ali Miyan stressed on the importance of an Islamic environment that nurtured faith and love for Allah and His Prophet (pbuh). He believed that, this can provide an enduring and stable foundation for a truly Islamic brotherhood. Muslims residing in Europe should redefine Islam to Europeans by firmly practicing it and by challenging the stereotypical European understanding about the Muslim world. Then, the Christian believers in European world will find common cause with Muslims, with whom they share so much of the same prophetic tradition. This process would open honest lines of inter-faith communication sustained by common interests of understanding, peace and harmony. There is a long history of the Muslim and the Christian civilizations drawing on each other, and being enriched by each other. Even now, there are many bridges across the fault lines between the two civilizations. Nonetheless, these two great civilizations (Muslims and Christians) can help to make them better signposted and better used.

Ali Miyan observed, “the failure of Muslims residing in the West, to maintain a visible Islamic identity, has hampered the progress of *Dawah* there. The challenges ahead can only be met by the tempo of Islamic *Dawah*. In the words of Ali Miyan, “The world today has reached a state very similar to that in which it found itself in the 6th century. The time has come, when the

Arabs should come forward and offer once again their lives in order to change the fate of humanity. To release it from its present miseries and save it from impending disasters, they should risk once again their ease and comforts, wealth and possessions and even their future prospects. Then would life be transformed once again and man walk in dignity towards the goal of higher destiny. The other alternative is that the Arabs remain engrossed in petty aims of personal gain, of preferment for offices and posts, salaries and income and securing better and still better means of personal comfort and ease. In such a case the world would remain in the slough in which it has been floundering for some time now”.³⁵

Further Ali Miyan says, “there is once again a need to encourage Muslim youths for sacrifice, build a bridge so that life could go across to its essential nobility and happiness. Life is like soil, which needs fertilizers. Which can enrich life so that it gives of its best fruits? The renunciation of the Muslim youth of its personal ambitions in order to bring Islam to its full fruition and fill Allah’s earth with peace and prosperity is the need of the hour.”³⁶

Ali Miyan’s works related to missionary work in the West

1. Nai dunya Amrica me saaf saf Baten (From the depth of Heart in America)

This is among one of the famous works of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. Originally, it is a collection of Maulana Ali Miyan's lectures, which he delivered upon a visit to USA in 1977 on the invitation of "Muslim Students Association". The English version of this book is entitled "*From the depth of heart in America*".

A number of Muslims from India, Pakistan and Arab countries, who had gathered to hear these sermons. Ali Miyan's main advice to Muslims of USA was on, how to preserve their faith in such a materialistic culture as America. In one sermon, he stated, "Brothers and sisters, you are not here merely to earn and spend. This any community can do. You are here to earn according to your need, but you must also know your status and should present before the Americans a new design of life. You should give the Azan which may stir their minds and offer Namaz (Salat), so that they may see and ponder over it".³⁷

In another place he states, "Today only the Muslims can give a message, but where are they? Has any Muslim country or community the courage to tell the Americans that "in the remembrance of Allah, only do the hearts find rest" Muslims no longer believe in themselves. How can they convey the message

of divine unity to others, which they themselves have lost faith in the power and efficiency of Namaz, in the truth and veracity of the Kalima, in the control and authority of Allah over gain and loss, and in the pre-ordination of good and evil, and made the Americans providers of their daily bread? How can they tell them '*there is no giver of sustenance, except Allah*'.

He further said, "First try to produce Faith within yourselves, perform Namaz and spend some time everyday in meditation, produce the warmth that has been destroyed by the smoke of factories, refresh your soul, set right the aim of your life, read the *Qur'an* daily, study the life of the Prophet (pbuh) and seek light from it, and then convey the message of the religion of nature to the Americans".³⁸

Maulana Ali Miyan addressed not only Muslims; but also gave speeches in five leading American universities, Columbia, Harvard, Detroit, South California and Utah. He also gave Friday sermons in the prayer hall of the United Nations Headquarter and Jama Masjids of Detroit and Toronto. In these gatherings, he spoke frankly to the public and conveyed the message of Islam plainly to the Americans. He said that, 'despite all technical advancements and economic achievements there existed a lack, or even absence of religious practice in the American society. Without these spiritual values and degradation of soul, any

society would head towards destruction. Therefore, it is essential with all the technological development that, there should be an enlistment of soul and increased religious adherence. This can only be attained by following the teachings of Islam, because Islam is the only religion that has so complete an organization of guidance to humankind, i.e. it is the last and final message of Allah to humankind, every individual's success is implicit in it. Therefore, Islam is the only religion that can cater to the spiritual requirements of Americans".³⁹

Ali Miyan stated "Oh citizens of the United States! My best wishes to you. I do not grudge at you and your attainments. I do not look at your progress with contempt. What I ask you most earnestly, is only to add '*Mashallah, wa la quwwata illa billah*', to what you have. Subordinate you worldly possessions and phenomenal achievements to the will of Allah. Place it all under the control and authority of divine law. Use it for the rebirth and redemption of equality, fraternity, justice and freedom from fear. Let there be no distinctions of race, colour and wealth between man and man. Use your enormous recourses for reconstruction of the world. You will thus be helping yourselves as well as others. Without it, your civilization cannot survive and its days are numbered".⁴⁰

2. Mazhab Ya Tehzeeb (Religion and civilization)

Mazhab Ya Tehzeeb is a short treatise, which is a collection of the lectures of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi delivered at Jamia Millia University, New Delhi in 1942. In this book Maulana Ali Miyan tried to explain the Religious and Spiritual requirements of a man through strong logical arguments. In this Modern Age, due to tremendous advancement in Science and Technology, man tried to escape the foundations' of Religion and seems to have a sense of hostility with regard to spiritual and religious values. He thinks that it is sufficient to achieve worldly possessions and materialistic development. According to him belief in religion should be maintained because it is a practice of ancient ages, when civilization was not completely developed.

Ali Miyan pointed out some basic questions and says, "There are some questions which are common to Religion, Philosophy and Civilization and on the answers to these, rest the very foundations of all human activities; such as, what is the beginning and the end of the Universe? Is there any life after death, and if there is, what sort of life is it? Is there any particular code of conduct necessary for success in the hereafter and so on".⁴¹

Ali Miyan then went on to illustrate the necessity of religion and spirituality for a man in order to attain success in this life and the hereafter. There is no way one should ignore the importance of religion in one's life.

3. Muslims in India

Ali Miyan's book "*Muslims in India*", is a collection of his articles on politics. He portrays the Muslim contribution that has gone into the making of Indian history and culture. Their presence at every forum of life throughout the most important period of Indian history drew out the best in them, laying the foundations of a broad-based and composite culture. The contribution of Muslims at all levels of life and society left its multi-dimensional impacts on almost all-human activity, including statecraft and land management. Their assimilation with fellow citizens set into motion common objectives at national levels; and aided by healthy influence exercised

The book was published in 1953. When Muslims in India were in desperate search for such objective writing, as would project the real image with accuracy to help ward off senseless onslaughts on their identity and existence in their very homeland. This work was well received at all levels and especially welcomed by the elite class.

Critical remarks

Ali Miyan spent his entire life for the cause of Islam. For this purpose, he toured almost all the important cities of India and visited a number of foreign countries as well. His religio-political thought based on understanding with others (*Ifham-o-tafheem*). He favoured the interaction with others and positive thinking with others. His earnest desire was to establish healthy relations with others particularly with the political leaders. His political insight was wide, he very carefully analyze the events and their far-reaching consequences. When Indian history took a serious turn, with the partition in 1947, differences started and increasing among the different faiths in India. Ali Miyan was very anxious to cure this, and to unify the nation on common grounds. Consequently, this was the theme, included in his every speech and writing. Surveying Muslim presence in India, Ali Miyan keeps political aspects separated from social and cultural history, which is central to his theme. He surveys the panorama closely, analyses the currents and reviews the output of centuries with a calculated calm, leaving the reader in no doubt about such fair handling of the subject and objective writing emerging thereon as both example and model for contemporaries.

All India Radio, after serializing the articles topic wise, broadcast the series on the national network; and soon it was translated into English as "Muslims in India" corresponding to Hindustani Musalman," written in Urdu. Ali Miyan advised all citizens of India and says, "it is the responsibility of every citizen of India, to make efforts to bridge up the void between the people of different faiths. If, serious circumstances occur, every individual will suffer. Even the educational institutions, industrial establishment and expensive markets will not remain untouched".⁴²

Though, he never participated in party or electoral politics. He did not even join the All India Muslim Majlis, established by his contemporary Dr. A.J. Faridi in 1967, as it took to electoral politics. Ali Miyan was one of the founders of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (1964), the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (1972) and the Ail India Dini Talimi Council. He presided over the Milli Convention in 1979. He also extended his patronage to the Islamic Fiqh Academy and the All India Milli Council when they were established.

To promote communal harmony, Ali Miyan became one of the founders of FOCUS which was later transformed into Society for Communal Harmony. He also established a movement 'Payam-e-Insaniyat' to preach the gospel of universal love and brotherhood.

Ali Miyan valued the Constitution and the secular order as a guarantor of the Islamic identity of the Muslim community and on non-discrimination against them in various spheres of life. But he clearly saw the historic process of assimilation at work in India and the long-term objective of Hindu Nationalism to absorb the Muslim Indians into the Hindu fold. Regarding Muslim Personal Law, Maulana's stand is clear and he is against any interference through legislation or through judicial pronouncement and on introduction of Saraswati Vandana in Schools in UP or others parts of India.

Some important religio-political issues of Muslim community during the last decades of the 20th century were solved under his guidance. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board launched in 1985 the movement for legislative nullification of the Supreme Court judgment in the Shah Bano Case, which the Muslim Indians saw as the thin end of the wedge for interference with the Shariat and for distorting the Islamic identity of the community. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorcees) Act, 1986 was its fruit, though it had several inbuilt flaws which had landed the community subsequently in endless litigation.

With Ali Miyan's consent in 1986, the AIMMM and the AIMPLB took up the question of restoration of the Babri Masjid when the unlocking of its doors in January 1986 for regular

darshan and *puja* converted it into a temple. Though he did not directly involve himself in the Babari Masjid Movement (whose Co-ordination Committee was later split to form the Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC), he guided it at all critical points and participated in negotiations with the government as well as Hindu representatives. Subsequently to the demolition, the AIMPLB, under his presidency took the question in its own hands including the direction of the proceedings in the title suit, the criminal case and the inquiry.

In the last decade of his life Ali Miyan served as the final arbiter, the last word, the *Marja*, the ultimate point of reference, on any intra-communal differences, even if he did not play any active role in resolving them. He counseled commitment with patience and wisdom, movement within the framework of democracy and rule of law, and dignity and not rhetoric in utterances.

Ali Miyan, assiduously sought by eminent political personalities from Indira Gandhi to Atal Behari Vajpayee, Ali Miyan acted as the bridge between the government and the national parties, on the one hand, and Muslim community, on the other.

All his active life, with Lucknow as his base, he wandered ceaselessly, not only within the country but also in the Arab world and the West, in a constant search; it seems to me, for reconciliation between Islam and the West, between rival

ideologies in the Arab world, between India and Pakistan and between the Hindu and Muslim Indians. Cautious in taking positions, he always looked beyond the turbulence of the time, through the flames of the current controversy. Even if he took part, his role was that of a mediator, of counseling patience, of avoiding confrontation, of appealing to reason.

A man who personified Islamic values, soft-spoken, cultured and courteous to the core, humility and modesty, patience and tolerance, moderation and balance, generosity and compassion all Islamic values marked his personality. Neither a politician, nor a publicist, essentially a scholar a man of religion, a spiritual person, a modern Dervish, a Mard-e-Momin who combined in himself the highest values of the Shariat and the Tariqat, of orthodoxy and Sufi Thought and who commanded respect for this transparent sincerity, for his simple living and for his selfless devotion to the common cause of the Community and the Nation, a man who lived for Allah alone and who wanted nothing but the good of all is no more.

Chapter : 8

Notes and References:

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CHAPTER 9

ALI MIYAN'S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION to ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE

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1. *Maza khasir al-alam bil inhitatil Muslimeen (Islam and the World)*

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Miyan's most famous book *Maza Khasir al alam bil inhitatil Muslimeen*, originally written in Arabic. This book critically analyses the rise and fall of Muslims and its impacts thereafter. The author's main contribution, however, is the appreciation of Muslim rulers of the Arab world and their rise to power, their enthusiasm towards Islam, their contribution towards Human civilization and their zeal for the promotion of Islam. After the glorious period of Islam, author highlights the decadence of Muslim power because of their luxurious life and they lost original fervor to Islam, due to which later Muslim rulers became the victim of their enemies and downfall came to existence. This book is considered by Von Grunebaum, as a representative self-review of contemporary Islam. The book is an analysis of history from Pre-Islamic Arabia to the Modern age. Firstly, the author presents a picture of the moral degradation of societies before the advent of Islam, their political, social, economic and moral deterioration. He particularly discusses the

societies of the Roman and Persian Empires, Arabs, Christians and Jews etc. The age before Islam was an age, steeped in ignorance, in which the mind and the spirit of man had become deteriorated and the high standards of morals and values of life had become debased. Sayyid Qutub of Egypt has stated in his foreword, “What was the condition of the world before the advent of Islam and the state of affairs in the east and the West, the north and the south? What was the intellectual temper of man from China to India, and from Persia to Rome? What was the colour and texture of contemporary societies? In what state were those Faiths of the world, which based on heavenly sanctions like Judaism and Christianity, and those, that worship idols and fire like Hinduism and Paganism? The questions with which the book actually starts, dealt with in a concise and comprehensive manner. The figure that the book presents of that age is clear-cut and delineates its futures with accuracy and insight. There was not a single man and movement of reformation that exists in the whole world. Even the religious sections in various societies like priests and rabbis, have introduced unrecognized activities and rituals in their religion for the sake of their materialistic interests. In the words of Maulana Ali Miyan, “the previous Faiths become play things in the hands of debased ecclesiastics who corrupted and twisted them beyond recognition, so much so that if it were possible for their founders

to return to physical life, they could not have to recognize them”.¹

After discussing the Pre-Islamic age of ignorance and gloom, Ali Miyan elaborates the revolution of morality and prosperity, which began with the commencement of the new faith. The age of darkness turned into a golden era of history. Before the rise of Islam, pre-Islamic people fight each other on small issues even on drinking water of Camels. After embracing Islam, these people turned friends and adopt death before his dying thirsty companion. The people who looted passersbys now turned hospitable. Women empowerment took place, and women attain all their due rights that the nature had conferred upon them. Women who were living a life of slavery and bondage, and who had no right to choose their spouse, according to their own choice, who had no right to personal property, now given their due rights. They provided right and facilities to get education. Ali Miyan discusses in detail the virtues of the Salafis (first Muslim generation) under the heading, “*history’s most remarkable revolution*”. Their Faith, self-criticism, honesty and trustworthiness, humanity, social responsibility, exceptional devotion, incredible obedience etc. These poor Arabs, who got divine guidance, and due to the fear of Allah and peaceful life hereafter for everybody they preached the doctrines of Islam to

the entire world. Though it was a gradual process. For example, in the very early phase of Islam, they conveyed the message of Islam to Rustam (the commander in chief of Persian Empire). As Ali Miyan states, “Rustam receipt Rabi bin Amir in a grand hall which was decorated with magnificent carpets. Rustam wore a crown and robes, which sparkled with gems, while Rabi bin Amir was very poorly attired, He was almost in rags and carrying a shield which was too small, his horse was also of a small breed, on which he rode straight towards Rustam, the horse trampling the luxurious carpets under its hoofs. The officers of the court frown on it. They said that he should at least take off the helmet before going in front of the Commander in Chief. But Rabi retorted, ‘I have come at your call instead of my own wish. I am willing to go back if you do not want me’. Rustam intervened and told his officers to, let Rabi bin Amir come. Rabi proceeded, leaning up his lance, and piercing the carpets with it at each step. The people enquired about the purpose of his visit. He said, “We have been sent by Allah to deliver you from the overlordship of his slaves (men) to his own overlordship, and from the narrow confines of the world to the boundless world of hereafter and from the oppressiveness of other religion to the fairness and justice of Islam”.²

These Arabs presented the brightest examples of courage and acts of moral height in the human history. They made great efforts to revive humanity. In the words of Ali Miyan, people who had entered the fold of Islam could now exert themselves more effectively for the moral and spiritual revival of humanity. They performed the task of establishing right and prohibiting wrong with much greater success. The rejuvenating current of Islam ran through the world, influencing men everywhere with a new life and an unparalleled enthusiasm for progress. The values of the life had been, rediscovered. Paganism became a sign of reaction, while it considered progressive to be associated with Islam. Even nations, that did not come directly under the influence of Islam, profoundly though unconsciously, benefited by the freshness and vitality of the new creative impulses released by its effects on a large part of the world.

For example, the development of Europe, which made a huge development in natural sciences and technology but the initial contribution behind these developments, is that of the Arabs.

Maulana Ali Miyan thinks, It was not, however, in the field of religion alone that Islam imparted a new glow of life to Europe. There is not a single aspect in which Europe made progress and was not indebted to Islamic thought. To quote from

Robert Briffault, “For although there is not a single department of European growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic civilization is not traceable”.³

Not only in natural sciences, but on religious parameters too Islam asserted indirect influences on Europe. A movement started in Europe in the eighth century against the practice of making confessions before priests. It asserted that man should address himself directly to his creator, without the aid of any intercessor. In addition to this, a feeling of revulsion produced throughout Christendom, with the support of powerful Roman Emperor, Leo 4th, against paintings and statues in churches. Emperor Leo 3rd issued a decree in 726 A.C. prohibiting the adoration of images. In 730 A.C. he proclaimed that the art of painting pan, sculptures were actually the remnants of Paganism. This new development in the very heart of the Greco-Roman culture zone was undisputedly an echo of the massage of Islam that reached Europe through Spain. Claudius, one of the pioneers of this movement, had actually been born and brought up in Muslim Spain. It was his custom to set fire to any image or painting that was found in his diocese, The reformation itself, in spite of all its shortcomings, was inspired by Islam. These are some of the impacts and outcomes of the new civilization that founded through the influence of Islam. Not only Muslims, but

people of all other faiths also enjoyed the glorious, peaceful and impartial environment of Islam.

Having discussed the glorious age of Islam, Maulana Ali Miyan then presents the factors and impacts of Islamic decline. Due to the moral degradation and lack of intellectual vigor on the one hand and, on the other hand European progress in Natural sciences and technology and rise of European imperialism, the world suddenly turned to a new phase of historic peril. Ali Miyan explains the negligence of Muslims towards these progressive activities in these words, “The destiny of mankind was being recast in the West. The world was changing at a breath-taking pace. He who lost a moment in idleness, lost a great deal. The Muslims alas! Neglected not minutes but centuries, whereas the European nations realized the value of time and covered the distance of centuries in years. The Turks legged behind so much in the field of industry that shipbuilding could not be started there before the 16th century. The printing press, health services and the defense academics introduced in Turkey only in the 17th century. Towards the end of the eighteenth century a balloon was seen flying over Constantinople and the Turks thought that it is a magic trick”.⁴

With the decline of the Turks, the international leadership passed from the hands of the Muslims to the Non-Muslim nations

of the West, which had been preparing since the long time and now left without a rival in the field. By virtue of conquests, cultural, economic and political penetration, their influence spread all over the World. With economic growth and technological advancement, Europe lapsed into materialism, which was the product of this technical advancement. The only goal of Europe then became materialistic progress. There are no moral values and religious visions, left in European Society. In the words Muhammad Asad the author of *Islam at the crossroad*, “No doubt there are still many individuals in the West who feel and think in religious way and make the most desperate efforts to reconcile their beliefs with the spirit of their civilization, but they are only exceptions. An average occidental be he a democrat or fascist, a capitalistic or a Bolshevik, a manual worker or an intellectual, knows only one religion, and that is the worship of material progress. They believe that, there is no goal other than to make life continually easier or as the current expression goes independent of nature. The temples of this religion are the gigantic factories, cinemas, chemical laboratories, dancing halls, hydroelectric works, and its priests are bankers, engineers, film stars, captains of industries etc. The unavoidable result of this craving for power and pleasure is the creation of hostile groups armed up to the teeth, and determined to destroy one another, whenever and wherever their respective interests clash. And on

the cultural side, the result is the creation of a human type whose morality is confined to the question of practical utility alone, and whose highest criterion of good and evil is material success”.⁵ The very nature of this modern materialistic civilization is that every one works for his selfish interests. There is no concern for the welfare of humanity as such but many promises made to work for social welfare.

As a result, people who adopted Western civilization forgot their spiritual heritage, or it can be said that they become hostile to spiritualism. This is a real loss to humankind, which is a result of the rowdy technical advancement of Europe. Ali Miyan pointed out that, the real loss of humanity under the leadership of Europe is the rise of materialistic thoughts. In the words of Ali Miyan, “Question pertaining to spiritual truths arose in Europe before Renaissance, but as the innate character of civilization gradually unfolded itself, and the West lost itself in the acquisition of materialism, these questions were disregarded. If one still hears of them there, it is only as a problem of Metaphysics. They do not occupy any place in practical life. The anxiety, the solicitude, the uneasiness, which for thousands of years these questions evoked in the east is not at all felt there”.⁶

In the end, Ali Miyan advised to the Muslim *Ummah*, particularly Arabs, and said they should come forward for a

peaceful solution. The true spirit of Islam is prevailed in Saudi Arabia. According to Ali Miyan, Arabs can solve the materialistic approach of the West. Peaceful co-existence and peaceful preaching particularly among the Ahl-e-Kitabis possible through dialogue and quotations from the Holy Books regarding life here and hereafter. In the words of Ali Miyan, “The Muslims will have to correct themselves internally. They can only face the onslaught of the materialistic West by, imitating its empty cultural forms, customs and social concepts, for these things have no place in the growth and rise of nations. All un-Islamic cultural imitations are bound to make people immoral, though materialistically progressive. The Muslims can exert themselves only by means of that inner spiritual force, in respect of which the West and other Non-Muslim world may accept the call of true spirit of Religion for peace here and hereafter. At another place he writes, “the world of Islam can still give the message of faith and life to the disillusioned humanity. The message of Prophet (pbuh), who had imparted it about 1400 years ago will be valid forever. It is a simple, dynamic, radiant and more majestic message than which the world can ever hope to receive”.⁷

Sayyid Qutub rightly remarks in the preface of the book, “the historical analysis the author gives, compels one to believe

that a time has come when the leadership will change, and humankind will be brought back to the real fountain head of the guidance, which aimed at leading man away from darkness to light, and from ignorance to knowledge and wisdom. The reader of the book soon realizes how very important such guidance is to the world today and what a terrible loss humankind will suffer upon losing it. This loss will sustain not by the Muslims only, but by the whole world. It is a loss that encompasses the past, the present and the future, both immediate and distant. By reading this book, a Muslim filled with shame and contrition for his criminal neglect and carelessness, he also becomes acutely aware of the tremendous potentialities that have been given to him, and begins to feel the overpowering desire to regain the leadership he lost through his own neglect and lack of appreciation of its quality.

2. Carvan-e-Zindagi (Autobiography of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi)

This is a voluminous autobiography of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. Originally, the book was written in Urdu. In this work, Ali Miyan tried to cover all the information related to himself as well as the remarkable events of his life. Ali Miyan's motivation for writing his autobiography is not merely to recount memorable milestones in his life but to provide an all-

encompassing spectrum of his activities that delineates his intellectual growth and development the historical incidents in his life are contextualized to provide the reader an opportunity to examine his role in the said events, in which Ali Miyan was an active participant. Furthermore, his autobiography makes copious reference to his prolific writings to highlight his contribution to contemporary Islamic thought. The *Carvan-e-Zindagi* also attempts to explore Ali Miyan's vision and thought regarding Islam and humanity as well as what was his attitude for the renaissance of Islam in the modern age. As Ali Miyan states in his autobiography that, he believes in steadfastness, progress, to make use of everything old which is beneficial, welcomes everything new which is sound, adopts from tradition what is sincere and rejects what is dubious.

Ali Miyan's contribution to producing a cadre of scholars who could effectively discharge the duty of *Dawah* and who could expound the *Shariah* as the way of life compatible with modern needs has been critically examined by a number of contemporary scholars.

The theological context is also a salient feature of *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, which shapes his progressive outlook and enables him to interact with scholars and movements with divergent viewpoints. Ali Miyan's *Carvan-e-Zindagi* represents a synopsis of his other

important works, which analyzed for a more complete appreciation of his contribution to contemporary Islamic thought.

The dissertation is very interesting and informative, because Ali Miyan does not confined only to the events, related to him personally but he included the social and political circumstances of his age. Since both the freedom of India and the partition of India, occurred during his lifetime, therefore he has covered all of these happenings. His concentration lies in not only the political conditions but also the remarkable events such as, the starting of reformist movements and institutions like Jamat-e-Islami, Tableeghi Jamat, Madrasah Darul-uloom Deoband and Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama etc. Because these were founded owing to the result of the failure of 1857 struggle of Freedom. Beside all of this, he has also illustrated short life sketches of famous contemporary personalities like Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, Allama Iqbal etc. Rightly, we can say this autobiography has included many little biographies of famous Muslim personalities. Besides all this he has illustrated his memorable journeys to other countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Great Britain, USA, Rangoon, Kuwait, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Turkey and Spain etc. Simultaneously, he discusses in brief the history, religious and social conditions of

Muslims in these countries and his personal impression of them. For example, when he visited Spain, the country in which the Muslims had ruled for over eight centuries, he visited all famous historical monuments of Muslims. He expressed his impressions in these words, "Islamic historical monuments were located more in Toledo (former Tulaitalah) than Madrid. Therefore, we arrived there by a tourist bus. The visitors were divided among English and French speakers. Our guide introduces all monuments in English. Whenever he introduced us to a new monument, he used to say, "When we expelled the Arabs". I heard it two or three times, but it was unbearable to me. So, I requested him, "Please do not say like this, it hurts my emotions". So, he stopped to say the sentence and said sorry.⁸ During the journey from Madrid to Toledo, I remained in front of the window and recalled the couplet of Iqbal, which is related to *Masjid-e-Qurtaba*. The six churches, which were constructed in the court of the *Masjid*, faded the figure of the Mosque. Therefore, it was very difficult to trace the direction of Qibla, after making a guess, I stood under an Arch. The guide told that, if anyone spoke loudly under this arch, the voice would reach to the last corner of the *Masjid*. It was a natural mike invented by Spanish-Arab architects. I boldly recite the verse of *Qur'an*

وَقَلَّ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

And say: "The truth has now come [to light], and falsehood has withered away: for, behold, all falsehood is bound to wither away!" (Qur'an 17:81)⁹

In another place despite of prohibition, he performed two rakat Salat, after a while the time of Asar Salat occurred, so we performed the Asar salat in the court of the Mosque, which many Christian natives witnessed with surprise".¹⁰

Hence, *Carvan-e-Zindagi* is a complete document, which reflects the life, thought and attainments of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. In addition, it examines his religious approach and reformist as well as political and social circumstances of his life. Therefore, this book helps the reader to understand the personality of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi efficiently.

3. Nuqoosh-e-Iqbal (Glory of Iqbal)

Nuqoosh-e-Iqbal, is among the most famous work of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, well accepted across the Muslim world, particularly in India and the Arab world. The strength of his work lies in inspiring the Muslims by reminding them of their glorious past.

To Ali Miyan, Iqbal, the greatest Muslim poet-philosopher of the Indian subcontinent, was a phenomenal personality who endowed with profound spiritual power, a keen sense of

attachment to the *Ummah* of Islam, as well as a comprehensive knowledge of the Western philosophical and economic systems. His poetry awakened the Muslims of India who make up a significant portion of the Muslim world, both in numbers as well as in terms of civilization and scholarly contribution to Islam. The author traces the greatness of Iqbal and his message through his texts, and enumerates six such factors apparent forms of his life and poetry. First, it is Iqbal's faith in Islam, which grew stronger as he matured and studied the Eastern and Western philosophies. Iqbal was an immensely learned man, and few modern Muslim intellectuals can boast to be equal to Iqbal in their knowledge of the West and its philosophical foundations. Iqbal's faith also grew stronger as he toured Europe and obtained his degrees in philosophy, economics, and law. Secondly, the author shows Iqbal's attachment to the *Qur'an*. The secret of Iqbal's sound *Qur'anic* knowledge was that he would read the *Qur'an* with such concentration and attention that it appeared as if it were being revealed to him there and then. Those who are familiar with his poetry can easily realize the truth of this statement. Thirdly, Iqbal's strength came from his paramount emphasis on, *Khudi* (selfhood). He sought to know himself, and prescribed the same path to all Muslims, to develop a strong sense of *Selfhood* (confidence in own self) through reliance on Allah alone. Scholars of the older times have said truthfully, "one

who knows himself, knows Allah". Iqbal came to know Allah and the secrets of this world by getting to know himself deeply and intimately. The fourth aspect was Iqbal's strictly followed routine of contemplation, worship, and recitation in the early hours of the day. The fifth and last source of Iqbal's fountain of inspiration was the great Persian scholar, the famed poet of *Mathnawi*, Jalaluddin Rumi. Iqbal sought to speak against materialism and atheist philosophy like Rumi had once fought the ill effects of Greek philosophy on the Muslim world.¹¹

The author then goes on to explore major themes that underline the great poet-philosopher's works. Iqbal viewed the European civilization with the eye of a keen observer and came to despise it. At that time, Europe was just on the brink of World War and had painted the most monstrous picture of human evilness that had ever been seen. Iqbal predicted that the Western civilization will commit suicide, and will vanish shortly, for it had disconnected itself from the inner world of the soul and spirituality and had become excessively engrossed with materialism. Iqbal's criticism was crucial in setting the mood for a Muslim evaluation of the West that was to follow soon. His censure of European materialistic civilization, despite its flourishing industries and luxurious lifestyle, complemented by his disapproval of Westernizing trends among Muslims, who had

by now been influenced and, in Iqbal's words, enslaved by the Western mind set.¹² While the Arab world of that time found its great literatures in the secularist Taha Hussain, who was pro-western and self-hating. The Indian Muslims were fortunate to have Iqbal as their matchless poet. Later, upon the insistence of Islamic circles in the Muslim world, Iqbal's poetry was translated into Arabic and other languages, and his message, universal and pan-Islamic as it was began to, transcend all borders. Iqbal's early twentieth-century appraisal of the West continues to have relevance and value for us. European hegemony was to end, soon giving way to America as its civilizational offspring. While the "new world" of America is not the same as the "old world," there are some fundamental similarities, and thus Iqbal's insight continues to be of relevance today.¹³ Ali Miyan has done us a great service by introducing Iqbal's thought to his readers.

4. Asr-e-Hazir men Deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh (Appreciation and Interpretation of Religion in the Modern Age)

This book is a critical analysis by Maulana Ali Miyan of the book "*The four basic Qur'anic terms*" of Maulana Abul Ala Maududi (founder of Jamat-e-Islami). In his book Maulana Abul Ala Maududi interprets the four basic *Qur'anic* terms "Ilah, Rab, Din, Ibadat" in an innovative manner. To Maulana Abul Ala Maududi,

except a little period when the *Qur'an* was in the process of being revealed the concept of these four terms had changed far from its real meaning or those, which prevailed among the early Muslims in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions. In the words of Maulana Maududi, “as centuries passed, the real meanings of these terms gradually underwent subtle changes so that, in course of time, instead of full connotations, they came to stand for only very limited meanings on restricted and rather vague concepts”.¹⁴ Describing the consequences of this change of the meanings of the four terms Maulana Maududi states “ This being the case, is it any wonder that through the mist that had come to surround the precise essence of the four terms in question, more than three fourth of the teachings of the *Qur'an*, or rather, the real spirit, thereof, had become obscured? This is the main cause of the shortcomings that are to be seen in peoples beliefs and acts now despite the fact that they have not formally given up the faith of Islam but are still in its fold.”¹⁵

Maulana Ali Miyan in his book, “Asr-e-Hazir men Deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh” condemned this innovative idea of Maulana Maududi and considered it as an effort of Modernization of Islamic thinking. It is a new concept, different from the traditional concept, temper and culture of Islam. It has resulted in the evaluation of new concepts, which are different from the

well-accepted norms of Islam, which prevailed uninterrupted from the time of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions until today. In the words of Maulana Ali Miyan, “I decided to take up the writing of this book when I observed and realized that the literature which the party was bringing out was giving a new direction to religious attitudes, and there was a great danger that a new meaning and interpretation of religion, and a new set of values and new standards would evolve. There was a danger that the thinking and endeavor of the intelligent, educated, sincere, active and determined class was likely to leave the straight path of the *Qur’an* and the *Sunnah*, i.e. the way of the Prophet (pbuh), concern for the Hereafter, faith and accounting, and to deflect in the direction of party organization in order to regain for Muslims, the political powers and governmental rule, so much so that its return to the straight path might become difficult”.¹⁶ From the above illustration, it appears that the objective of this book is to defend the traditional Islamic norms, which lay uninterrupted in the entire Islamic history, and to present them in a new thought provoking style, so that an educated fellow could easily realize its importance. Therefore, Ali Miyan gave logical proofs in favour of his viewpoint.

Critical remarks

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi is originally a historian. His writings, including those on religion, bear distinct historical roots and reflect an in-depth study of the subject, Islamic history in particular. His thought and philosophy reflect significant influence of the subject; and his writings, tempered with the cold logic of history, are replete with citation of lessons that it holds out in abundance. The scholar and philosopher of Islam that he is, Ali Miyan in more places than one introduces himself "as an humble student of history."

May it be the penning of a martyr's biography; or a thesis recounting the rise and expansion of Muslim power; or lamentations on civilizational maladjustments following the waning fortunes of Muslims; or the multi-splendored achievements of the Musalmans in India; or the obligation to pay literary tribute to the Spiritual orders, Maulana derives an inherent satisfaction in heaping himself with the debris of history. He delves into it and digs with the spirit of a research scholar and spade, until convincing proof is forthcoming to clear the haze on views taken for granted and to report on events of history hitherto ignored by the historians at large.

He made his debut as a historian through the gateway of biography, remaining well within the ambit of historiographer's

classification of scholars researching and contributing to political, historical and religious biographies as historians in their own right. His biography of Syed Ahmed Shaheed made an instant success and received wide acclaim, both within and abroad. Written originally in Arabic, then Urdu the book, as if, through intuition was published at a time (1939) when the intellectual revolution was taking shape among the Muslims of India. Their urge for independence, their struggle for regaining political power, their resolve for sacrifice, their endeavour for restoring a lost heritage, all stood personified in the person of 'the martyr' (Shaheed). As a piece of objective writing, the book written after a painstaking research added to the literary shelf of Indian history. The biography qualified as an authority on the life and times of Syed Ahmed Shaheed, pioneer and pivot of the resistance against an alien hegemony in 19th century. Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Tazkirah, and that of Maulana Mohammed Zakariya 'Biography of Zakariya' fall in the same category of writing Islamic history through the media of biography, each book proving a valuable source of information for the reader and research scholar alike. The biography of Shah Abdul Quadir Raipuri is Maulana's spiritual as well as a literary tribute to the great divine of the era. A parallel publication covers the "Life story of Maulana Ilyas"; pioneer of the Tablighi Jamaat whom he held with high reverence. Ali Miyan not only records the copious details of the

simple life style of Ilyas, but also remains witness to the growth of the movement, from its humble beginnings, into a voluntary mass of roving evangelists, who steering clear of the temporal track, spread out in all directions carrying the word of Allah.

Ali Mian's another monograph 'Al Murtaza' was published in 1988 it was well received, satisfying the aspirations of all groups, especially those who hold Syedna Ali in special veneration. His important work is (*Purane Chiragh*). In "*Purane Chiragh*" the author counts the lampposts down memory lane, ascertains their identity, recognizes each by names. The 21 years from 1936 to 1957 form an important period in Maulana's life, as it is this period which witnessed the best of his works on Islamic History, "*Seerat Ahmed Shaheed*" was commenced in 1936 and completed in 1939. "*Maaza Khasaral Aiam*" was commenced in 1944, completed in 1950. "*Tarikh-i- Dawat-o-Azeemat*" was commenced in 1952, the first volume completed in 1954, the second in 1957 and subsequent volume following as a matter of course in 1963 and 1980.

In "*Maza Khasarai Alam*" he examines the phenomenon causing the decline. He is not prepared to believe that a people endowed with an invincible faith could succumb to worldly temptations and, divesting themselves of the Book, get lost in maize's of their own creation. The chapter entitled "The Ebbs and Tides in the History of Islam" makes some tragic reading, as

the author seems reluctant to pen down what he sees and what his sense of history seems to perceive. Nevertheless, the realities of time and history must prevail. He is prepared to concede the toll taken by time, paralleled by an evolutionary process; but he does not *prima facie* believe in the continuance of this phase for all time. What concerns him most, however, is the record of accomplishment of the followers, which is a sordid story of desertion of values and precepts handed down the generations. As a historian, he is in love with the past, especially his Islamic and humanitarian heritage, on which the Present flourishes. He is therefore, not prepared to take the future as a speculative commodity. He is guided by a sense of perception to prove that the Future is as the Present makes it, to which the followers of Islam, the world over, are no exception. The years intervening the publication of "*Maaza Khasaral Alam* (1950) and of "*Tarikh-i-Dawat-o-Azeemat*" (1954) was a period when a new optimism dawned, visibly replacing the despondency that dominated the former work.

He introduced a new outlook in the latter publication, pinpointing the student's attention to the perennial change that was yet underway at each step of Islamic civilization and redeemed successfully through the efforts and foresight of the Saviours. In this marathon thesis running into four volumes (1954-1980) Ali Miyan is at his best whilst illustrating from the

life and times of Saints, Seers, Scholars and Islamic thinkers that it was adherence to faith alone which helped reinstate the believers to their original status. For them it was ever a changing scenario at each crucial phase and each time a Saviour, a saint, a theologian, a scholar was at hand to confront the powers and movements designed to keep their tracks blocked. Each such period has had its share of men destined to provide succor and sustenance. From the days of Khalifa Umar-bin-Abdul Aziz in Syria to the saints of Basra and Baghdad and events moving Imam Taimiah into action, followed by the Saintly Orders in India (Hzratt Nizamuddin Aulia ,Yahya Maneri, Mujaddid alf-i-Sani),right down to the exhortations of Shah Waliullah, Islamic resurgence made itself felt whenever the "Ummah", reacting to the winds of change turned to their faith for survival and relief. And never did the divine will fail.

Forsaking Islamic scenario for a while, if we turn to world history, the foremost name of Edward Gibbon appears for scrutiny .In his "Decline and fall of Roman Empire", he recounts the story of Romans, and their one Empire. The might attained over a period spanning a thousand years (approx) came to naught within a few generations, which Gibbons attributes to "the triumph of barbarism and religion". He holds Christianity responsible for the disaster oblivious of the truth that the inbuilt

mechanism of the System proved unequal to the strength of the new Faith and hence it failed to stem the fall.

Maulana's view is diagonally opposite that of Gibbon's. He is not in agreement with the proposition that religion can be bracketed with barbarism or else the power of the State would be rendered futile. He believes that faith is a cementing force and aids the continuity of History, citing Islamic history as an example where bad periods, amidst crisis and strain, have been overcome by the will to survive; to continue, regardless of prevailing odds.

He believes that faith, which is absolute, stands in no need of Renaissance. What, contrarily is needed, is the infrastructure of civilization, which must have the strength to resist in order to survive. Muslims, at critical phases of their history, have later regained what they had lost earlier, primarily through their dependence on restructuring by men with foresight and builders endowed with the spirit of humanity.

As a component of the same continuity of history, no system however perfect, has ever been able to counter opposition without the soothing, touch of religion. Religion is integral to historical growth and, devoid of it, systems and civilizations ostensibly invincible collapsed and faded into oblivion.

Chapter : 9

Notes and References:

1. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Islam and the World*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1981.
2. Ibid., p.174.
3. Ibid., pp. 123-24.
4. Ibid., p. 111.
5. Ibid., p. 131. See also, Muhammad Asad, *Islam at the Crossroads*, pp.55-56.
6. Ibid.,p. 139-40.
7. Ibid., p. 192-93.
8. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Carvan-e-Zindagi*, Vol-3, Lucknow, Maktaba-e-Islam, Queen Road, 1997, p. 235.
9. Ibid., pp. 176-77.
10. Ibid., pp. 194-95.
11. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Nuqoosh-e- Iqbal*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 2006, pp. 73-74.

12. Ibid., p. 82.
13. Ibid., p. 89.
14. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Asr-e-hazir men Deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh*, Lucknow, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, 1983, p. 21.
15. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
16. Ibid., p. 24.

Conclusion

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi is most versatile Islamic scholar of the modern age. More than 50 works attributed to him on different Islamic Disciplines. This study aimed on the critical evaluation of his thought on various Islamic aspects, because Ali Miyan was the only Islamic scholar who was equally appreciated by most of the Sunni Schools of Thought, though they were opposite in their thoughts and beliefs, like *Deobandi* School and *Salfi* School. The research also focused to identify, what were the special features of Ali Miyan's thought and attitude that all major Sunni Schools admired his personality and welcomed his ideas.

Chapter first deals with general introduction of the thesis. The background of the study and its significance. Later we have discussed in brief the sources of the work and research techniques.

Chapter second deals with the early life and education of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi. It focused on the factors involved in the personality devolvment of Ali Miyan. For understanding the thought of a scholar it plays a crucial role. Mostly the thought of a person influenced by the environment in which he lives. The social events and revolutions which Ali Miyan saw by his own eyes or he had a chance to interact with them. Like the British rule in India and its adversary behavior

with the Muslim population and struggle of freedom in the Indians like *Khilafat Movement* and afterwards the Independence and partition of India. In between the changing trends of cultural and social structure of India as well as the changing temperament of Muslim masses towards the religion and rise of different reformist movements of Islam in the Indian subcontinent Like, *Jamat-e-Islami*, *Tableegi Jamat*, *Deoband Movement*, *Aligarh Movement* and *Salafi Movement*, *Nadwa Movement* etc. And their diversified thoughts and practices molded the thought of Ali Miyan in a specific manner. This was reflected in his speeches and works. These all aspects are discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter third discusses with the thought of Ali Miyan related to *Qur'an* and its exegesis. He applied deep thinking and intellect to study the inherent philosophical quotations of the *Qur'an*. Most of his writings contain several references from the *Qur'an*. He used *Qur'anic* verses extensively to prove his thoughts and opinions. He put forth amazing illustrations of *Qur'anic* verses in his own specific way. Although he did not write a full commentary of the *Qur'an* but he explained some specific verses of the *Qur'an* and highlighted the lingual beauty. These new philosophical illustrations present a wonderful aspect of the *Qur'an* to readers and increase its significance to manifold. To

understand his *Qur'anic* approach, his three writings are very important: *Moarka-e-Iman-o-Maddiyat* (Faith verses Materialism), *Mansab-e-Nabuwat aur uske ali Muqaam-e-Hamileen* (Islamic Concept of Prophethood) and *Qur'an ke Usool o Mubadi*. I have discussed each of them briefly so as to present his thought which he expressed in defining the commentary of these verses.

Chapter fourth critically examines the thought of Ali Miyan related to *Hadith*. In general, we can divide this chapter into three parts. The first part deals with his early education in *Hadith* which he studied with different teachers and their different methods of *Hadith* teachings. Like the method of Maulana Haider Hasan Khan and of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. The second part deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Hadith*. It focused on different aspects of his thought regarding *Hadith*, which were extracted from his own works and works done by others related to the subject. According to Ali Miyan, *Hadith* constitute the complex, which provides the climate in which faith thrives and bears fruit. No faith can retain its warmth of feelings without presenting living examples of its teachings to infuse a life into its adherents. In a religion, the most potent and authentic information of religious events and their associated emotions and illustrations can only be provided by a portrayal of the life story of its founder. Judaism, Christianity and several

other Faiths lost their inner vitality due to the simple reason, that they could not preserve reliable records of the life and character of their founders, deprived of this life giving source they were cut-off from the intellectual and spiritual climate which was necessary not only for the sustenance of faith and growth of religious spirit in the followers, but also that which could have saved it from the onslaught of materialism and agnosticism. Some of the leaders of these faiths realized this shortcoming and tried to fill in the void with manuals containing life accounts, sermons and table talks of their saints and holy men, but these efforts eventually proved to be a concoction of innovations and deviations, thereby distorting the original teachings of those Faiths. Thus, it is an outstanding virtue of Islam that it has preserved life record of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and no other Faith shared this value with it. In addition, the history of compilation of *Hadith* is a bright chapter of Islamic history, it reflects that this is not an accidental event or a *bidat* (innovation) of later ages. The inclination of companions (*Sahabah*) toward the collection and compilation of *Hadith* just in the life time of the Prophet (pbuh) and recording of large number of Tradition, later, the development of the discipline of *Hadith* science for analyzing the authenticity and categorization of *Hadith* by tabiun (disciples of companions), as well as the mass gathering of the students of *Hadith* from Iraq, Iran, Khurasan and Turkistan etc.

Their big sacrifices in learning, memorization, compilation, their extraordinary determination and development of the new Art of *Hadith* and its critical scrutiny like *Riwayat*, *Dirayat* and alongwith *Asma-al-Rijal*, the rising of great scholars of *Hadith*. As well as the inclination of whole *Ummah* towards the importance of *Hadith* and its publication and popularity in *Ummah*, all these evidences are indicating that, after the holy *Qur'an* it is the most important source of Islam, completely preserved for the coming generations. It is a great feature which reflects that it is a true religion which is revealed and protected by Allah and yet it is in its original form yet. No effects of time and space has degraded its genuinty.

To promote doubts regarding the authenticity of *Hadith* is a dreadful conspiracy against Islam. Side by side he advised Muslims to rely on *Sahih Ahadith* (Authentic) in practice and possibly avoid the *Zaeef* (weak) traditions. *Zaeef* traditions played the most important role behind the occurrence of turmoils, conflicts and doubts and controversies in Islamic history. There is no *Noor* (light), clarity and reality or promise and support of Allah to *Modhu* and *Zaeef Ahadith*, as compared to the *Qur'an* and *Sahih Ahadith* (Authentic *Ahadith*). In addition to this, there are many illogical concepts in these traditions, as a result, different types of doubts and controversies have emerged within the Faith. Musims should consult only authentic traditions even in *Fazail-e-*

Amal (Virtues of fair deeds). Hence, the other works on *Hadith* are not equivalent to *Siha-e-Sittah*, because *Siha-e-Sitta* is undisputedly recognized by the majority of *Ummah*. Therefore, Muslims should only rely on *Siha-e-Sittah*. It is seen whenever Muslims believed in weak *Ahadith* and practiced it, people presented very low opinion on Islam.. The third part deals with the works of Ali Miyan. I have tried my best to discuss each of his works related to *Hadith* and presented his different aspect of thought included in them.

The chapter five deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Tasawwuf*. He himself was a great Sufi and asserted a great emphasis on its significance in a Muslim life. In this Chapter, we dealt with his introduction and adherence to *Tasawwuf*, his progress in later life and his moderate logical approach to it. In general we can divide the spiritual life of Ali Miyan in four stages. The first stage was that when he joined Khawaja Gulam Muhammad Dinpurvi and after his death Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In second stage, he joined Maulana Ilyas and his Tableeghi Movement after the death of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the third stage he joined Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri after the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in 1944. In the fourth stage he joined Shaykhul *Hadith* Maulana Muhammad Zakariya after the death of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri. This

shows that Ali Miyan has a long and through experience of *Tasawwuf*.

As an expert, his thoughts regarding *Tasawwuf*, give a new look to the discipline. The expression of his thoughts and strong advocacy of his opinion balanced by logical reasoning presents '*Tasawwuf*' or spiritual education is essential for the development of moral character and personality of a man. So, extreme devotion to Allah is an interesting goal and crucial factor to produce men of morality in Islamic history.

Ali Miyan had a deep insight in theory and practice of *Tasawwuf*. He was not merely a scholar but a leading personality in the area. However, he was the disciple of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori yet he was, impressed by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed's Sufi thought. He considered him as his role model in *Tasawwuf*. Ali Miyan was also influenced by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi. Ali Miyan's approach regarding *Tasawwuf* was balanced and clear. He considered *Tasawwuf* as an essential factor in developing the true spirit of religion in a man. According to him, *Tasawwuf* plays a vital role in the development of great Muslim personalities throughout Islamic history. Knowledge only cannot make men of high morals and pious character, purification of the heart and mind is equally necessary for one's personality development, which can easily attained

through *Tasawwuf*. To him, *Tasawwuf* is a prime part of religion required for the development of high moral values in its followers. He also termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin* (inner jurisprudence). To Ali Miyan, *Tasawwuf* is as old as Islam. All the Prophets (pbut) practiced it. It is the essence of Faith and the soul of Islam. Its basic ingredients are consciousness and a living realization of the omnipotence of Allah (Tauheed) in all its implications, adoption and love of Allah, purification of the heart and righteousness. It constitutes the very base of religion. It calls upon man to inculcate in himself the qualities of piety, sincerity, patience, steadfastness, and gratitude to Allah. Alongside, it should not be judged, by the conduct of fraudulent pretenders or worldly men calling themselves, Sufis, so, there are false Ulama who are to be avoided according to *Hadith*.

Tasawwuf is not a *Qur'anic* word nor can it be found in *Hadith* literature but other words, can be found which are equivalent to it, like "Tazkiya" in the *Qur'an*, and "Ihsan" in *Hadith*. These are some groups of people which opposed *Tasawwuf*. One group comprises those who accept its constituents separately, but deny it if it is referred to as a whole. The majority of the people applaud the aforementioned aim and qualities separately, but if it be said to them that, Some people have for some reasons given all these qualities a common name

“*Tasawwuf*”, then their colours change instantly and they say, ‘We don’t believe in *Tasawwuf*, it has caused great harms’. The other group is of those to whom it is acceptable if it proposed under a different name. For example if it is said, “The *Qur’an* has termed it ‘*Tazkiyah*’ (cleaning). The *Hadith* names it ‘*Ahsan*’, and later jurists termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin*”. They would then reply that there is no reason for contradiction and all these are declarations of Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

Verily, neither alterations can make to all the books written, nor the tongues of men can be withheld. Otherwise, if we were given the option, we should have referred to it by the words ‘*Tazkiyah*’ and ‘*Ahsan*’ and not used the word ‘*Tasawwuf*’. Now this is the popular name. Likewise, the history of the arts and sciences is full of such common technical terms. In the end of the Chapter Fourth, I discussed some of his works related to the West and tried to put forward his thought incorporated in them.

The sixth chapter deals with Ali Miyan’s thought regarding *Fiqh*(Islamic Jurisprudence). Though he was not a *Faqih* and left no separate work related to the subject but he discussed briefly about *Fiqh* and its related issues in his different books and papers. Ali Miyan’s approach was rational and moderate unlike the traditional Ulama who were rigid and radical regarding Islamic Jurisprudence. Though, he was a Hanafite and firmly practiced

his Maslak (creed), yet he condemned the rigid outlook. To him, different schools of thought in Islamic Jurisprudence reflect the diversity of Islamic culture. No one of them is more preferable to the other. The conflict among different schools of jurisprudence is Un-Islamic and an act of Ignorance.

The establishment of *Fiqh* is very important Islamic event. It is an outstanding characteristic of Islam that, it provides such a diversified look to Islamic Jurisprudence. It is a heavenly occurrence because Allah is willing for establishment of *Fiqh*. So that, Islam will be able to solve, every problem related to human life in every age till the last day. It is not merely an imagination but it is a matter of fact. It can be observed that in the Middle Ages, when Islam spread to vast areas and great kingdoms were established under its flag, new issues were faced due to diversified culture, these new issues dealt with Judiciary, Social and Political issues such as Taxation, Zimmis, Kharaj, and Inheritance etc. The great Jurists of the time solved these quests without any delay. It was not done on a small scale rather four regular schools of Jurisprudence were established. This vast and tremendous work of extracting solutions of legal issues according to Islamic *Shariah* by a large number of *Fuqaha* (Jurists) was inclusive. Therefore, there is no need of *Ijtihad* on the issues, which were already solved by these great jurists. He believed

that, these eminent jurists of the Middle Ages were experts of the field and their work was matchless as well as profound. It is worthless to make efforts on the issues that previously solved by these eminent jurists. In addition, it is dangerous for the Muslim *Ummah*, because there is a doubt of rising of controversies and new sects with it. However, with admiring the great services of those eminent Jurists of the past, he did not overlook the significance and need of *Ijtihad* on new arising issues. Because Islam is fully compatible to the changing world and it is necessary to discuss and solve these new issues, therefore *Ijtihad* is the requirement of the day. He think that, in every age of Islamic history, the method of *Ijtihad* was used by great Jurists to find out the solution of new issues in the light of *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Till date, the importance of *Ijtihad* hasn't decrease because in the modern world due to the rapid development of Science and Technology, and changing life style new issues continuously arise. Therefore, it strongly needed, to discuss and solve them according to the Islamic *Shariah*. Also, the Islamic *Shariah* should be written in modern style and updated regularly, so that it is not claimed that Islamic *Shariah* is outdated. However, *Ijtihad* should be done according to its rules and limits, encoded by the expert jurists.

He always hated and discouraged rigid approach regarding *Fiqh*. Once he visited a Hanafite Madrasah and stayed there for three days as a guest. He was informed that, ‘*Due to performing Rafa-Yadin and saying Ameen loudly, during Salat by a student, the authorities of the Madrasah terminated the student*’. Ali Miyan intentionally performed Rafa-Yadin and said Ameen loudly all the time during his stay at the *Madrasah* though he was a Hanafite himself.

Due to the reason of his moderate and liberal approach, he was popular and admired by all Juristic schools equally, not only in India but also in the entire Islamic world. The intellectuals from all schools of Jurisprudence have appreciated his reformist ideas openheartedly. Non-Hanfites like, Arab scholars, politicians and even people of the masses, have admired him.

The Seventh chapter deals with the thought of Ali Miyan regarding the west. This chapter encompasses most of his thoughts and Ideas. Because his greatest anxiety was to present true figure of Islam to the West so that it can be adopted by the West. To him despite of all scientific and technical advancements the Western culture is devoid of spiritual peace and satisfaction. There is no or very little space for spiritual sense in the Western culture due to the reason of it adopted the Materialistic way of life. To him, the most dreadful evil of the West is their extreme

dependence on “*Materialism*” and denying “*Spirituality*”. Because the source of Western civilization is Greek civilization. And the Greek civilization was purely materialistic and there is very little scope for spirituality in it. The Greeks did not believe in God without giving him physical forms and shapes, and making images of his attributes and installing them in their temples. A logical list on ten kinds of gods with different shapes and “Categories” was included in Aristotle’s writings.

He also termed the *Materialism* as *Modern Irreligiousness*. Materialism elevates natural resources, technological contrivances and professional expertise to the level of Allah. Man has today pinned his hope in material objects and thrown himself on the mercy of specialists and experts. For success and failure, prosperity and adversity, honour and infamy, life and death of nations have now been committed to the case of one expert or the other. The arrogant spirit of extreme phenomenalism, the reverence for materialism and physical forces, and the overwhelming confidence in experts, scientists and technologists are the new forms of irreligiousness, invested with a halo, which makes them partners of Allah. These are supposed to be sharers of Divinity, the new Gods of modern age. Ali Miyan judge the moral declining of the West appropriately he emphasized, the coupling of moral and religious depravity with a phenomenal

progress in the scientific and industrial fields led to the creation of a striking disparity between power and ethics. Men learnt to fly in the air like birds and to swim in the water like fish, but they forgot how to walk straight on the earth. Undisciplined knowledge and unenlightened wisdom furnished every highwayman with a sword. Deadly weapons were placed in untrained hands, which repeatedly plunged the world into horrible blood baths. Now Science has given the atomic and Hydrogen bombs to humankind as a weapon for suicide. We enabled to travel very fast from place to place, but places to which we travel are diminishing the worth to travel. Distances destroyed and nations brought to one another's doorsteps, with the result that international relations are getting worse, and the strains and stresses engendered by these new facilities for knowing our neighbours engulf our world in war. The invention of broadcasting enabled us to speak to neighboring nations, with the result that, each nation exhausts its resources for irritating its neighbors. By attempting to convince others, of the superiority of its form of government. All of today's inventions; the aircrafts humming in the sky, the knowledge of mathematics, dynamics, mechanics, familiarity with electricity and internal combustion, ingenuity in the application of knowledge, the skill in the working of woods and metals, suggest that their inventors were supermen. Now consider the purposes for which the modern

aircrafts has been, and then notice how increasingly they are used to drop bombs to shatter, choke, burn and dismember, defenseless people. These, are the purposes of either idiots or devils. Hence, it should be noted that the Islamic attitude is different with regard to modern technological development, it doesn't deny totally the use of new sciences and technologies, but rather credits it as a blessing and mercy from Allah.

Ali Miyan advised Muslims to carry out their duty. The Muslims could discharge their sacred obligation only when they are able to produce in themselves that strength of Faith and courage of conviction skill and sincerity, which can repulse the onslaught of imitative tendencies and glittering catchwords and overcome the petty considerations of immediate gain, both individual and collective. For this their leaders too, will have to make the necessary sacrifices, but even from the personal point of view these sacrifices will not be in vain.

In the end, I discussed some books of Ali Miyan, which reflects his thought to the West.

The Chapter eight deals with the Religio-political thought of Ali Miyan. In the above discussions, we clearly mentioned that the greatest anxiety of Ali Miyan was to present the true message of Islam to others. For this purpose, he toured many places both

in the country and abroad and delivered many lectures to remove misconceptions against Islam in the minds of common people. Many of these lectures were compiled later in the form of books. Ali Miyan believed, Islam to be the only solution to the crisis of the present world. Ali Miyan's exposition of Religion (Islam) was marked by Moderation. He was not a fanatic in any sense of the term and believed in Islam as a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor in human history. To him, Islam is a civilization force, which has retained its relevance even in the modern age, and is a viable counterpart to the Western civilization with all its excuses. The West has made tremendous progress in the fields of Science and Technology. Everybody welcomes scientific development but the misuse of it is very dangerous and is a great threat to our civilization. Mostly Westerns are materialistic. Though they are Ahl-e-Kitab, yet they have little faith on their own revealed books. Due to ego problems, they do not accept Islam, though they know Islam is the complete final form of religion. There is a need for the faith, to provide a bright future to humanity and this can alter the prevailing situation. For this purpose, Islam is the most appropriate religion in all dimensions. In addition, Ali Miyan addressed the whole *Ummah*, particularly the Muslim elite and Arabs with these words, "We should feel the pain of Humanity. We can only cure it through the teachings of the Messengers

(pbut). Because, the way that was adopted by Messengers (pbut) is the best one”. In every speech and congregation, Ali Miyan demonstrated, the way adopted by Messengers (pbut) in different ages for the reformation of society. It was their divine duty to take on their responsibilities and convey the message of Islam to humankind. Ali Miyan had tried his best to convince non-Muslims that they were in the wrong path, and if they did not accept the true message of Allah then, they would have to face its consequences on the Day of Resurrection. If they accepted Islam, they would enjoy everlasting peace in Paradise. Ali Miyan yearns to remind the entire humanity, the status and responsibilities of a man. According to him, men may be divided into many communities, like Religious, National, and Tribal, but the most durable relation between humans is that of “*Humanity*”. All the Prophets (pbut) and Sufi Saints adopted this method of reforming the society. In every age, it gave positive results and reformist achievements to human beings.

At a very young age, he began to convey the divine message of Islam among the Indian people. His greatest anxiety was to protect every human being from the eternal loss of the hereafter.

For this very purpose, he met Dr. Ambedkar and conveyed to him this divine message. At that time, Maulana Ali Miyan was

merely a youth of only 22. He did not succeed, yet he continued this divine mission throughout life. When Indian history took a serious turn, with the partition in 1947, differences started increasing among the different faiths in India. Ali Miyan was very anxious to cure this, and to unify the nation on common grounds. Consequently, this was the theme, included in his every speech and writing. To quote Ali Miyan, “it is the responsibility of every citizen of India, to make efforts to bridge up the void between the people of different faiths. If, serious circumstances occur, every individual will suffer. Even the educational institutions, industrial establishment and expensive markets will not remain untouched.

Realizing that the Muslim community was with numerous problems that demanded a political solution, Ali Miyan forced himself, against his will, to enter politics. However, he was a stranger to the world of politics. A sudden burst in violent attacks against Muslims instigated by Hindus, in which, scores of Muslims lost their lives, as well as the continuing discrimination of the government to Muslims, forced him to turn his attention to politics from 1964 onwards. At a time when the role of the state had extended into almost every sphere of personal and collective life, he wrote, “The Muslims could not afford to remain aloof from politics. To do so would be tantamount to collective suicide, for they would not be able to protect their

identity, their personal laws, their religious traditions, and even their lives, in the face of the growing threat of Hindu aggression as well as the Hinduisation of the state”. When Hindus began a mass, nation-wide campaign to destroy the mosque, promoting anti-Muslim emotions and violence, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing a public statement calling for peace and tolerance, pleading that the matter be resolved through constitutional means. At a peace rally in Lucknow in 1990, he said, “in the face of mounting Hindu militancy, Muslims must respond by turning to Allah, refraining from sin, inviting non-Muslims to Islam and adopting the path of steadfastness, tolerance and bravery”. In the wake of the destruction of the Babri mosque in December 1992, Ali Miyan reacted by issuing another appeal for calm. He called for the reconstruction of the mosque on its original site, a ban on all organizations preaching communal hatred, and a storm-like movement for promoting inter-communal harmony and patriotism. He bitterly criticized the action of some Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh who reacted to the destruction of the Babri mosque by attacking Hindu temples there. He condemned this as a negation of the teachings of Islam. Ali Miyan said, “Adding that, in the present situation, Muslims in these countries should protect their non-Muslim minorities and serve as a model for Hindus in India, to be emulated by their own minorities”.

Ali Miyan taught the Indian Muslims how they could live in a religiously plural society in such a way that their beliefs could remain free from the stain of communal prejudices and conflict, while at the same time being in harmony by respecting each others religious beliefs.

He insisted that rather than being a barrier in the path of Islamic missionary work, Muslims should be facilitators. Due to these circumstances, which have been discussed earlier, Maulana Ali Miyan with some of his companions established a reformist movement in 1944. Which was later named as “Payam-e-Insaniyat” (Message of Humanity). The very purpose of this movement was to bridge up the void among different faiths, to clarify the misunderstandings against Islam, to convey the revealed message to humanity with peace. Till today, this movement is working successfully. In the end, we have discussed some of his works related to missionary work in the West.

In the Ninth chapter, we have discussed some of Ali Miyan’s most famous works, which focused on the Islamic Thought of Ali Miyan. Among them, the first one is *Maza khasir al alam bil Inhitatil Muslimeen (Islam and the World)*. This is the most famous book of Ali Miyan. Actually, it is brief review of history in which Ali Miyan tried to explain the Pre-Islamic period and its evils and after that he discussed the emergence of Islam

and its revolutionary consequences on the lives of un-civilized, Arabs and they turned to most virtuous society in the world. He discussed these consequences in detail and afterwards he discussed the decline and causes of decline of Islamic world and its dreadful consequences on the whole world. According to Ali Miyan whole world suffered by the decline of Islamic world. After *Islam and the world*, I discussed some of his other books in brief which reflects his Islamic thought.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi wanted to preserve the doctrine of Islam in its own original form according to the spirit of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This spirit will help non-Muslims to understand Islam easily and will embrace Islam *Inshallah*. There is no doubt that his study and knowledge about vast Islamic literature and world history, was immense. That is why he was able to analyze thoroughly the present conflict between Islam and modern World Order. To him the Muslims and Non-Muslims, both were responsible for unrest. On the one hand, he criticized the Materialistic thought of the West and its increased desire to worldly comforts. He termed it as *Tehzeebi Jahiliyat* (cultural ignorance). He visited European countries many time and delved many lectures in which he highly appreciated the technological advancement of the West, but simultaneously he pointed out the shortcomings of

their culture. He argued with historical evidences that the reformation of modern society is only possible with the method of Holy Messengers (pbut). The only solution of current unrest is to adopt Islam; Because Islam is the greatest caller of spirituality. All the technological advancement is useless or even destructive if there is no sense of morality in the possessor. Because if there is a man with no morality, when these advance equipments come into his hands most probably he will make misuse of them. That is why despite of tremendous advancement in the field of science and technology the society is more unsafe than earlier. Every time there is a fear of nuclear war among great powers. Millions of innocent lives, sacrificed brutally just for the protection of the selfish interests of few wealthy people or Nations, with the use of advance deadly weapons.

While on the other hand Ali Miyan criticized the present role of Muslim *Ummah*, in failing the true figure of Islam to others, which resulted in the emergence of grave misunderstanding against Islam. This is because of their negligence of the the responsibility of *Khair-al-Ummah* (best of community). This neglect proved itself very harmful for the Muslim *Ummah* as well as for the entire Humanity.

However, he was not rigid in his attitude nor he discarded the Western culture totally. To him there are many good

traditions in West which were borrowed from Islam and Muslims should adopt them.

He also severely criticized the neglect of the importance of scientific development by Muslims, which resulted in lagging behind of Muslim *Ummah* in the field of Science and Technology. This is the cause of the great misunderstanding that Islam discourages technological development. He described an incident that a hot air filled balloon was flying above the city of Istanbul in the 17th century, people were seeing it surprisingly and they thought that it is a supernatural thing.

Above all the most distinctive feature of Ali Miyan's thought is "Moderateness". However, he was firm in his faith and practice but always keen to seek compromising possibilities with others. He was not in favour of imposing his thought on others by force but by convincing them. On the subject he wrote a book entitled "*Asr-e-hazir me deen ki Tafheem-o-Tashreeh*". In addition he criticize the rigid attitude of the people particularly some Islamic scholars, by whose behavior the hostility emerges against Islam. He termed it an act of Ignorance (*Jahiliyah*).

Finally, we can conclude that the Islamic thought of Ali Miyan is truly Islamic, liberal and moderate. His Islamic thought is multi-dimensional and thought provoking. Maulana has

critically examined all aspects of human civilization in the light of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). We have critically evaluated Ali Miyan's thought on, Tafsir writing of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith literature, Tasawwuf and Tasawwuf literature, Islamic Fiqh, Western civilization and his own religio-political thought. He was a great socio-religious reformer of the twentieth century. Maulana thinks, Islam is moderate and most suitable for all the times till the day of resurrection. Islam is the final form of religion. If we failed to understand the spirit of the religion, this is our own fault. We should not blame Islam. Ali Miyan urged the Muslims to follow the doctrines of Islam perfectly and present the same to non-Muslims, so that they will be impressed and embrace Islam. This is the need of the hour. According to Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, the materialistic approach of the West is very dangerous and will destroy the world civilization. For peaceful co-existence and to establish peace in the world, West should accept and practice the doctrines of all revealed books of Allah and instructions of His Prophets (pbut). Spiritual education is also the need of the hour to establish ^{peace} in the World.